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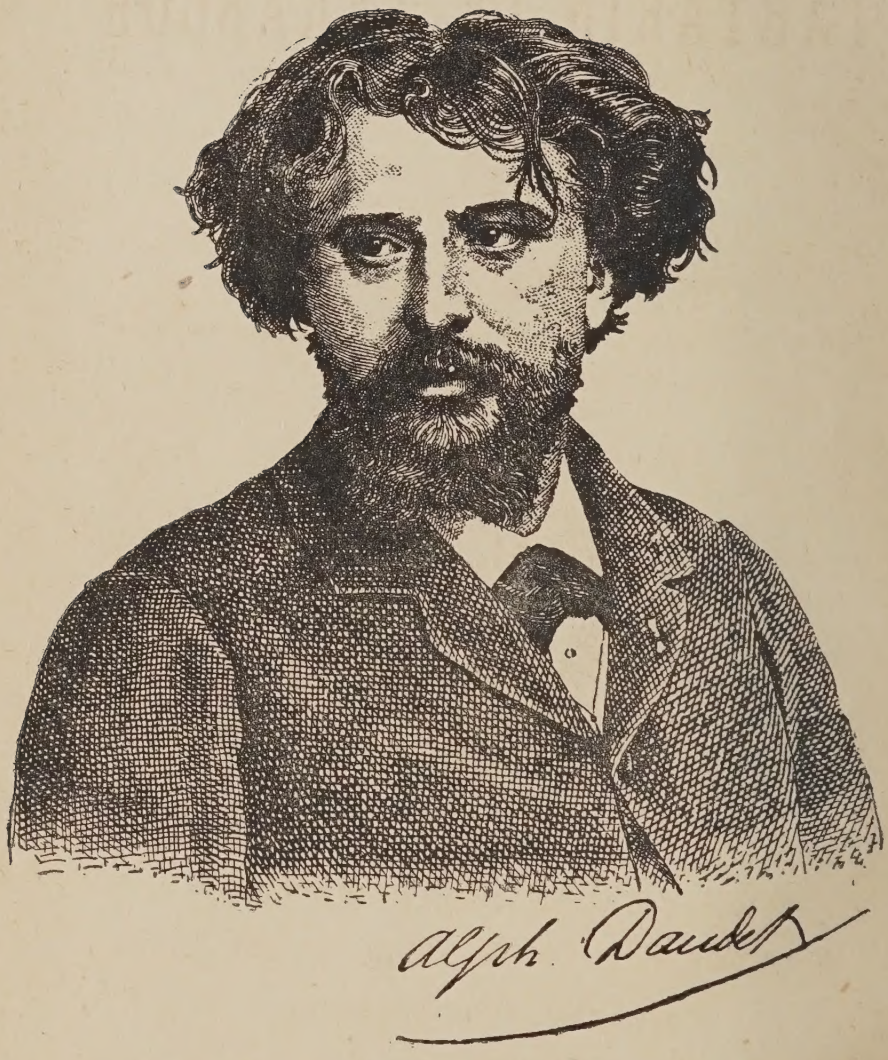
Alph. Daudet

THE

PRODIGIOUS ADVENTURES

OF

TARTARIN OF TARASCON

BY

ALPHONSE DAUDET

AUTHOR OF "SAPPHO" "KINGS IN EXILE" "NUMA ROUMESTAN,"
"LISE TAVERNIER," ETC.

LONDON:

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CONTENTS.

EPISODE I. AT TARASCON.

CHAP.		PAGE.
I.	The Garden of the Baobab	9
II.	General View of the Good Town of Tarascon. — The Cap-Hunters.	13
III.	Na, Na, Na! Continuation of the General View of the Good Town of Tarascon .	18
IV.	They!	23
V.	When Tartarin of Tarascon went to the Club	27
VI.	The Two Tartarins. — Memorable Dialogue between Tartarin-Quixote and Tartarin-Sancho	31
VII.	The Europeans at Shanghaï. — High Commerce. — The Tartars. — Can Tartarin of Tarascon be an Impostor? — Mirage . .	34
VIII.	The Mitaine Menagerie. — An Atlas Lion at Tarascon. — Terrible and Solemn Interview	38
IX.	Singular Effect of Mirage	43
X.	Before the Start	48
XI.	Sword-Cuts, Gentlemen, Sword-Cuts, but no Pin-Thrusts!	51
XII.	Of what was said in the Little House of the Baobab	55
XIII.	The Start	58
XIV.	The Port of Marseilles. — Embark, Embark!	63

EPISODE II. AMONG THE *TURS*.

CHAP.		PAGE.
I.	The Voyage across. — The Sheshia's Five Positions. — The Evening of the Third Day. — Mercy!	68
II.	To Arms! To Arms!	72
III.	Invocation to Cervantes. — Disembarking. — Where are the Turs? — No Turs. — Disillusion	76
IV.	The First Watch	80
V.	Bang! Bang!	85
VI.	Arrival of the Female. — Terrible Combat. — The Rendezvous of Rabbits	89
VII.	Story of an Omnibus, a Moorish Lady, and a Garland of Jessamines	93
VIII.	Lions of Atlas, sleep!	97
IX.	Prince Gregory of Montenegro	101
X.	Tell me the Name of thy Father and I will tell thee the Name of this Flower	107
XI.	Sidi Tart'ri Ben Tart'ri	112
XII.	They write to us from Tarascon	117

EPISODE III. AMONG THE LIONS.

I.	The Transported Stage-Coaches	122
II.	Where we see a Little Gentleman pass	129
III.	A Convent of Lions	134
IV.	The Caravan on the March	139
V.	The Evening-Watch in a Clump of Rose-Laurels	146
VI.	At Last!	153
VII.	Catastrophes on Catastrophes	160
VIII.	Tarascon! Tarascon!	166

PRODIGIOUS ADVENTURES OF TARTARIN.

EPISODE I. AT TARASCON.

CHAPTER I.

THE GARDEN OF THE BAOBAB.

My first visit to Tartarin of Tarascon has remained in my life a never-to-be-forgotten date. It was twelve or fifteen years ago; but I remember it better than yesterday. The intrepid Tartarin lived then at the entrance of the town, in the third house on the left, on the road to Avignon, —a pretty little Tarasconian villa, with a garden in front, a balcony behind, very white walls, green blinds, and on the doorsteps a brood of little Savoyards, playing hop-scotch, or sleeping in the genial sunshine, with their heads on their blacking-boxes.

From the outside the house looked like nothing at all.

One would never have believed himself before the dwelling of a hero. But, when one entered, bless my stars!

From cellar to garret the whole building had an heroic look, even the garden.

Oh, Tartarin's garden! There were not two like it in Europe: not a native tree, not a French flower, nothing but exotic plants, gum-trees, calabash-trees, cotton-plants, cocoas, mango-trees, banana-trees, palm-trees, a baobab, cochineal-plants, cactuses, Barbary fig-plants. One would think himself in the middle of Central Africa, ten thousand leagues from Tarascon. All these, of course, were not of their natural size. The cocoa-trees were hardly bigger than beet-plants, and the baobab (*giant-tree, Arbos gigantea*) was at ease in a mignonette-pot; but what of that? For Tarascon it was pretty enough; and the townspeople, admitted on Sunday to the honor of contemplating Tartarin's baobab, would return full of admiration.

Think what emotion I must have felt that day in crossing that magnificent garden! It was a very different thing when I was introduced into the hero's museum.

This museum, one of the curiosities of the town, was at the end of the garden, opening on a level with the baobab by a glass door.

Imagine a great hall, hung with guns and sabres from top to bottom, all the arms of all the countries in the world, — carabines, rifles, blunderbusses, Corsican knives, Catalonian knives, bayonet-revolvers, poniards, Malay krishes, Caribbean arrows, flint-head arrows, knuckles, bludgeons, Hottentot clubs, Mexican lassos, and what not.

From above, a fierce, hot sun made the steel of the swords and the butt-ends of the fire-arms glisten, as if to make one's flesh crawl all the more. However, the pleasant look of order and neatness which reigned over all this *yataganery*,[1] was somewhat re-assuring. Every thing there was arranged, cared for, brushed, and labelled, as in an apothecary's shop; with here and there a simple little card, on which one read: —

Poisoned Arrows! Don't touch!

or,

Loaded Arms! Beware!

[1] The *yatagan* is a Turkish weapon, and from it the author derives this expressive word of his, which it is impossible to translate. — ED.

But for these labels I never should have dared to enter.

In the middle of the museum was a little round table; on it a flagon of rum, a Turkish pouch, "Capt. Cook's Voyages," Cooper's and Gustave Aymard's romances, narratives about hunting, bear-hunting, falcon-hunting, elephant-hunting, &c. Lastly, before the table was seated a man, from forty to forty-five years old, small, stout, thick-set, red-faced, in shirt-sleeves and flannel drawers, — a short heavy beard, and fiery eyes. In one hand he was holding a book, in the other brandishing an enormous pipe with an iron lid; and, while reading I know not what formidable tale of scalp-hunters, he made, by protruding his under-lip, a terrible face, which gave this worthy countenance of a small Tarasconian proprietor the same character of good-natured ferocity which reigned over the whole house.

This man was Tartarin, Tartarin of Tarascon, — the intrepid, the great, the incomparable Tartarin of Tarascon.

CHAPTER II.

GENERAL VIEW OF THE GOOD TOWN OF TARASCON. — THE CAP-HUNTERS.

At the time of which I am speaking, Tartarin of Tarascon was not yet the Tartarin that he is to-day, — the great Tartarin of Tarascon, so popular in all the South of France; still, even at that period, he was already the King of Tarascon.

Let me tell you whence came this royalty.

First, you are to know that down there everybody, great and small, is a hunter. Hunting has been the passion of the Tarasconians ever since the mythological times, when La Tarasque [1] struck the hundred blows in the marshes of the town, and the Tarasconians of the day organized *sorties* against her. You may see it was a good while ago.

So every Sunday morning Tarascon takes arms, and sallies forth from her walls, with game-bag and gun, accompanied by the noise of dogs, fer-

[1] A small river flowing by Tarascon.

rets, trumpets, and hunting-horns. It is a superb sight. Unfortunately, game is lacking, absolutely lacking.

Stupid as brutes may be, you see, that, in the end, they become distrustful.

For five leagues round about Tarascon the burrows are empty, the nests abandoned ; not a blackbird, not a quail, not the smallest rabbit, not the tiniest white-tail !

They are, however, very tempting, — those pretty Tarasconian hillocks, all perfumed with myrtle, lavender, and rosemary ; and those fine muscadine grapes, swollen with sugar, which grow in rows on the banks of the Rhone, are extremely appetizing also. Yes ; but there is Tarascon behind, and in the little world of fur and feather Tarascon is in very bad repute. The birds of passage themselves have marked it with a great cross on their charts ; and when the wild ducks — flying down toward the Camargue in long V's — perceive from afar the spires of the town, the leader begins to cry out loudly, "There's Tarascon ! There's Tarascon !" and the whole flock make a circuit.

In short, as for game, there now remains in the country only one old rascal of a hare, who has

escaped, as if by miracle, the Tarasconian September massacres, and persists in living there. At Tarascon this hare is very well known. They have given him a name: he is called the Express. It is known that he has his abode on the land of M. Bompard, — which, by the way, has doubled and even trebled the price of this land, — but they have not yet been able to catch him.

At the present moment there are only two or three desperate fellows in deadly pursuit of him.

The rest have buried the hatchet, and the Express has long since passed into a local superstition, even though the Tarasconian is but little superstitious by nature, and eats jugged swallows when he finds them.

"Well, then," you will say, "since game is so scarce at Tarascon, what do the Tarasconian hunters do every Sunday?"

Why, bless me! They go off into the open country, two or three leauges from the town. They assemble in groups of five or six; stretch out quietly in the shade of a well, an old wall, or an olive-tree; take from their game-bags a good slice of stewed beef, raw onions, a sausage, and anchovies; and begin an interminable lunch, washed down with one of those pleasant Rhone wines which excite mirth and song.

After this, when they are well ballasted, they get up, whistle to the dogs, load the guns, and begin the hunt: that is to say, each of these gentlemen takes his cap, throws it into the air with all his might, and shoots it on the wing with number five, six, or two, according to agreement.

He who shoots his cap oftenest is proclaimed king of the hunt, and enters Tarascon triumphantly in the evening, with the riddled cap on the end of his gun, in the midst of barking and fanfares.

It is needless to tell you that there is a brisk trade in hunting-caps in the town. There are even hatters who sell caps already riddled and ragged, for the use of the unskilful; but scarcely any one but Bézuquet the apothecary is known to buy them. It is dishonorable!

As cap-hunter, Tartarin of Tarascon had no equal. Every Sunday morning he would set out with a new cap, every Sunday evening come back with a rag. In the little house of the baobab, the garrets were full of these glorious trophies. So all the Tarasconians recognized him as their master; and, since Tartarin was thoroughly familiar with the hunting-code, and had read all the treatises and all the manuals on every possible kind of hunting, from cap-hunting to tiger-

hunting in Burmah, these gentlemen had made him their Chief Justice Cynegetic, and took him for umpire in all their discussions.

Every day, from three to four o'clock, at the gunsmith Costecalde's, a stout man with a grave look, and a pipe between his teeth, was to be seen seated in a green leather armchair, in the middle of a shop full of cap-hunters, all standing up and wrangling. It was Tartarin of Tarascon rendering justice, — Nimrod and Solomon combined.

CHAPTER III.

NA, NA, NA! CONTINUATION OF THE GENERAL VIEW OF THE GOOD TOWN OF TARASCON.

To their passion for hunting the strong Tarasconian race join another passion, — for songs. The consumption of songs in this little region is beyond belief. All the sentimental old trash which grows yellow in the oldest sheets is found again at Tarascon in the bloom of youth, in full splendor. It is all there, — all. Each family has its own piece, as in the town is understood. They know, for instance, that the apothecary Bézuquet's is, —

"Thou, white star that I adore."

The gunsmith Costecalde's, —

"Wilt thou come to the country of cabins?"

The Registrar's, —

"If I were invisible, nobody would see me."

(*Comic Song.*)

And so on for all Tarascon. Two or three times a week they meet at each others' houses, and sing *them.* The singular part of it is, that they are always the same, and that, long as these worthy Tarasconians have been singing them, they never care to change them. They are bequeathed in the families from father to son, and nobody touches them: they are something sacred. They are never even borrowed. It would never enter Costecalde's head to sing Bézuquet's, nor Bézuquet's to sing Costecalde's. And, still, you may imagine whether they ought to know them in the forty years they have been singing them. But no: each keeps to his own, and everybody is content.

In songs, as in caps, Tartarin was *facile princeps.* His superiority over his fellow-citizens consisted in this. He had none of his own. He had them all.

All!

Only the difficulty was to make him sing them. Returning early from the successes of the drawing-room, the Tarasconian hero much preferred plunging into his hunting-books, or passing the evening at the club, to playing the lady's man before a Nîmes piano, between two Tarascon

candles. These musical parades seemed to him beneath him. Sometimes, however, when there was music at Bézuquet's pharmacy, he would enter as if by chance, and, after allowing himself to be much entreated, would consent to give the grand duet of "Robert le Diable," with Mother Bézuquet. Who has not heard it has never heard any thing. For my part, were I to live a hundred years, I shall all my life see the great Tartarin approaching the piano with a solemn step, leaning on his elbow, making a face, and under the green reflection of the show-vases in the front windows, trying to give his good face the fierce satanic expression of Robert le Diable. Hardly would he have taken his position, before the company would begin to tremble. They would feel that something grand was coming. Then, after a silence, Mother Bézuquet would begin with an accompaniment: —

"Robert, toi que j'aime
Et qui reçus ma foi,
Tu vois mon effroi (*bis*),
Grâce pour toi-même
Et grâce pour moi."

"Robert, thou whom I love,
To whom my faith I plighted,

Thou seest I am affrighted (*repeat*):
Mercy for thyself,
And mercy for me."

In a low voice she would add, "Your turn, Tartarin;" and Tartarin of Tarascon, with outstretched arm, clinched fist, and dilated nostril, would repeat three times in a formidable voice, which rolled like a thunderclap in the bowels of the piano, "No, no, no!" which in good Southern dialect he pronounced, "Na, na, na!" Whereupon Mother Bézuquet would repeat once more, —

"Mercy for thyself,
And mercy for me."

"Na, na, na!" would Tartarin roar louder than ever, and there it ended. It was not long, as you see; but it was so well launched, so well imitated, so diabolical, that a fear and trembling would run through the pharmacy, and they would make him repeat his "Na, na!" four or five times in succession.

Thereupon Tartarin would wipe his brow, smile on the ladies, wink at the men, and, retiring on his triumph, go off to the club, to say, "I have

just been singing the duet of 'Robert le Diable' at the Bézuquets'."

And the most incredible thing was that he believed it.

CHAPTER IV.

THEY!

It is to these different talents that Tartarin of Tarascon owed his high position in the town.

Moreover, it is a positive fact that this remarkable man knew how to "take" with everybody.

At Tarascon, the army was for Tartarin. The brave commandant Bravida, retired captain of the wardrobe, used to say of him, "He is a rabbit" (i.e., a clever fellow); and you may imagine that the commandant was a connoisseur in rabbits, after having dressed so many.

The magistracy was for Tartarin. Two or three times, even in court, old President Ladavèze had said, speaking of him, —

"He is a character!"

Lastly, the people were for Tartarin. His breadth of shoulder, his carriage, his look, — the look of a fine trumpeter's horse that did not fear noise, — this reputation of a hero which came from nobody knows where, some distributions of big

sous and of raps on the head to the little shoeblacks stretched out before his door, had made him the Lord Seymour of the place, the king of the Tarasconian market-place. On the quays, Sunday evenings, when Tartarin was returning from the hunt, with the cap on the end of his gun, well girt in his fustian vest, the porters of the Rhone used to bow, full of respect, and with sidelong glances, pointing out the gigantic biceps swelling roundly on his arms, would say to each other in low tones of admiration, —

"There's a giant for you! He has DOUBLE MUSCLES!"

DOUBLE MUSCLES!

It is only at Tarascon one hears those things.

However, in spite of all, with his numerous talents, his double muscles, popular favor, and the esteem, so precious to him, of the brave commandant Bravida, former captain of the wardrobe, Tartarin was not happy. This narrow town-life weighed on him, suffocated him. Tarascon's great man was *ennuyé* at Tarascon. The fact is, for an heroic nature like his, for a rash adventurous soul which dreamed only of battles, races on the pampas, grand hunts, sands of the desert, hurricanes and typhoons, to "beat the bush" for caps every

Sunday, and the rest of the time to administer justice at the gunsmith Costecalde's, was hardly — Poor, dear great man! In time, he would have had enough to make him die of consumption.

In vain, to enlarge his horizon, to forget for a time the club and the market-place; in vain did he surround himself with baobabs and other African vegetation; in vain did he pile up arms on arms, Malay krishes on Malay krishes; in vain did he stuff himself with romantic reading, seeking, like the immortal Don Quixote, to snatch himself by the vigor of his dream from the claws of pitiless reality. Alas! all that he did to appease his thirst for adventures only served to augment it. The sight of all his arms kept him in a state of perpetual anger and excitement. His rifles, arrows, and lassos cried to him, "Battle, battle!" In the branches of the baobab the wind from afar blew, and gave evil counsel. To finish him came Gustave Aymard and Fenimore Cooper.

Oh! in the heavy summer afternoons, when he was alone, reading in the midst of his swords, how many times has Tartarin risen roaring, how many times has he flung away his book, and rushed to the wall to unhook a panoply!

The poor man would forget that he was at home

in Tarascon, with a kerchief round his head, and trouserless, but would put his reading into action, and, stirred up by the sound of his own voice, cry, brandishing an axe or a tomahawk, —

"Let *them* come on now!"

"*Them!*" Whom?

Tartarin did not well know himself. *Them!* — It was every thing which attacks, every thing which fights, every thing which bites, claws, scalps, every thing which howls and roars. *Them!* — It was the Sioux Indian dancing round the war-stake to which the unhappy white is attached.

It was the grizzly bear of the Rocky Mountains, who rolls awkwardly about as he walks, and licks himself with bloody tongue. Again, it was the Touarez of the desert, the Malay pirate, the bandit of the Abruges. *Them*, — in short, it was *them!* that is to say, war, travel, adventure, glory.

But alas! the intrepid Tarasconian called *them*, defied *them*, in vain. *They* never came. Pécaïreh! What should *they* have come to do at Tarascon?

Tartarin was always expecting *them*, however — above all, when going to the club in the evening.

CHAPTER V.

WHEN TARTARIN OF TARASCON WENT TO THE CLUB.

THE knight-templar making ready for a *sortie* against the infidel besieger, the Chinese tiger equipping himself for battle, the Comanche warrior entering on the war-path, all are nothing as compared to Tartarin of Tarascon arming himself *cap-à-pie*, to go to the club at nine o'clock in the evening, an hour after the trumpets sounded for retiring.

"Clear away for action!" as the sailors say.

In his left hand Tartarin would take an iron-pointed knuckle; in his right hand, a sword-cane; in his left pocket, a billy; in his right pocket, a revolver; in his bosom, under his coat, a Malay krish — but never a poisoned arrow: those arms are too treacherous.

Before starting, in the silence and obscurity of his museum, he would exercise a moment, — fence, shoot at the wall, make his muscles play; then

he would take his skeleton-key, and cross the garden gravely without hurrying, — *à l'Anglaise*, gentlemen, *à l'Anglaise*. This is true courage. At the end of the garden he would open the heavy iron door. He would open it suddenly, violently, so that it should bang against the outside wall. If *they* had been behind, you may imagine what a *jam!* Unfortunately, *they* were not behind.

The door open, Tartarin would go out, glance right and left, shut the door hastily, and double-lock it; then he was off.

On the Avignon road not a cat could you see. Doors shut, windows dark. All would be black, except here and there a street-lamp, twinkling in the fog of the Rhone —

Superb and calm, Tartarin of Tarascon would go off thus in the darkness, beating time with his heels, and with the iron end of his cane drawing sparks from the pavement. Whether on boulevards, broad streets, or alleys, he would take care always to keep to the middle of the way, — an excellent precautionary measure, which allows you to see coming danger, and, above all, to avoid what may fall in the evening from the windows in the streets of Tarascon. In seeing so much

prudence in him, do not be led to suppose that Tartarin was afraid. No! only he kept on his guard.

The best proof that Tartarin was not afraid is, that, instead of going to the club by the direct route, he would go there through the town; that is to say, by the longest and the blackest way, through a heap of villainous little alleys, at the end of which the Rhone is seen shining ominously. The poor man hoped always that, in the *détour* by one of these cut-throat places, *they* were going to rush out from the darkness, and fall upon his back. *They* would have been well received, I answer for it. But, alas! derisive Destiny willed that never, in the great never, should Tartarin of Tarascon have the luck to have an unpleasant encounter. Not even a dog, not even a drunkard. Nothing!

Occasionally, however, a false alarm, a sound of steps, of stifled voices. "Attention!" Tartarin would say to himself, and remain rooted to the spot, peering into the darkness, snuffing the wind, and putting his ear to the ground, Indian fashion. The steps would approach, the voices become more distinct. No more doubt. *They* were arriving. *They* were there. Already Tartarin, with fiery eye and heaving breast, would gather himself

up like a jaguar, and be preparing to spring, uttering his war-cry, when suddenly, from the bosom of the night, he would hear good Tarasconian voices calling him very calmly, —

"Té! Vé! — it's Tartarin. And how do you do, Tartarin?"

Hang it! It was the apothecary Bézuquet, with his family, returning from singing *his* at Costecalde's. "Good-evening, good-evening!" grumbles Tartarin, furious at his mistake; and fiercely, cane in air, plunges into the darkness.

Arriving at the street before the club, the intrepid Tarasconian would wait a moment longer, walking back and forth in front of the door, before entering. At length, tired of waiting for *them*, and certain that *they* would not show themselves, he would cast a final glance of defiance into the darkness, and mutter angrily, "Nothing, nothing! Always nothing!"

Thereupon the brave man would go in to play his bézique with the commandant.

CHAPTER VI.

THE TWO TARTARINS. — MEMORABLE DIALOGUE BETWEEN TARTARIN-QUIXOTE AND TARTARIN-SANCHO.

WITH this rage for adventures, this need of strong emotions, this madness for travel, for rushing about to land's end and back, how in the world happened it that Tartarin of Tarascon had never left Tarascon?

For it is a fact. Up to the age of forty-five, the intrepid Tarasconian had not once passed the night out of town. He had not even made that famous journey to Marseilles, which every good Provençal allows himself at his majority. At best he knew Beaucaire; and yet Beaucaire is not very far from Tarascon, since there is only the bridge to cross. Unfortunately, this wretched bridge has been so often carried away by the wind, it is so long and so slender, and the Rhone is so wide at that point, that, bless me! — you understand — Tartarin of Tarascon preferred *terra firma.*

For I must acknowledge to you, there were in our hero two very distinct natures. "I feel as if I were two men," was a saying of I know not what father of the Church. He might have said it truly of Tartarin. The great Tarasconian, our readers have been able to perceive, bore within him the soul of Don Quixote, — the same chivalrous transports, the same heroic ideal, the same mad love of the romantic and of the sublime; but unluckily he had not that body of the celebrated hidalgo, — that lean, bony body, that excuse for a body, — on which material life had so little hold, capable of passing twenty nights with cuirass unbuckled, and forty-eight hours on a handful of rice. Tartarin's body, on the contrary, was a good fellow of a body, very fat, very heavy, very sensual, very fond of ease, very ready to complain, full of vulgar appetites and domestic exigencies, — the short-legged, big-bellied body of the immortal Sancho Panza.

Don Quixote and Sancho Panza in the same man! You understand what an ill-assorted household theirs must be! What combats! what altercations! What a fine dialogue for the pen of Lucian or St. Evremond, — a dialogue between the two Tartarins, Tartarin-Quixote and Tartarin-

Sancho! Tartarin-Quixote, getting excited over Gustave Aymard's narratives, and crying, "I go!"

Tartarin-Sancho, thinking only of rheumatism, and saying, "I stay."

TARTARIN-QUIXOTE (much excited). — "Cover thyself with glory, Tartarin!"

TARTARIN-SANCHO (very calm). — "Tartarin, cover thyself with flannel."

TARTARIN-QUIXOTE (more and more excited). — "Oh the good, double-barrelled rifles! Oh the daggers, the lassos, the moccasins!"

TARTARIN-SANCHO (calmer and calmer). — "Oh the nice knit waistcoats! the good warm leggings! Oh the nice caps with ear-pieces!"

TARTARIN-QUIXOTE (beside himself). — "An axe! Give me an axe!"

TARTARIN-SANCHO (ringing for the maid). — "Jeannette, my chocolate."

Thereupon Jeannette appears with an excellent cup of chocolate, hot, rippling, and savory, and with tempting slices of toast with anise, which make Tartarin-Sancho laugh, while stifling the cries of Tartarin-Quixote. Thus it happened that Tartarin of Tarascon had never left Tarascon.

CHAPTER VII.

THE EUROPEANS AT SHANGHAÏ. — HIGH COMMERCE. — THE TARTARS. — CAN TARTARIN OF TARASCON BE AN IMPOSTOR? — MIRAGE.

Once, however, Tartarin came near going off, — going off on a long voyage.

The three brothers Garcio-Camus, Tarasconians established at Shanghaï, had offered him the management of one of their counting-houses there. Now, that was just the life he needed, — important affairs, a world of clerks to govern, relations with Russia, Persia, and Turkey in Asia, in short, high commerce.

In Tartarin's mouth these words, "high commerce" seemed so high sounding!

The Garcio-Camus house had, besides, this advantage, that they received there sometimes visits from the Tartars. Then they would shut the doors quickly; all the clerks would take arms; the consular flag would be hoisted; and "Bang, bang!" they would fire through the windows on the Tartars.

With what enthusiasm Tartarin-Quixote jumped at this proposition I need not tell you: unfortunately, Tartarin-Sancho did not hear through the same ear, and, as he was the stronger, the matter could not be arranged. In the town it was much talked of. "Will he go?" "Will he not go?" Bet yes or bet no. It was an event. After all, Tartarin did not go; but, nevertheless, this affair did him much honor. To have come near going to Shanghaï, or to have gone there, was all the same to Tarascon. By dint of speaking of Tartarin's voyage, people ended by believing that he had returned from it; and, in the evening at the club, all these gentlemen would ask him for information on the life at Shanghaï, — the customs, the climate, opium, and high commerce.

Tartarin, being very well informed, would give with a good grace the details desired; and, in sooth, at length the brave man was not very sure that he had not gone to Shanghaï; so that, in recounting for the hundredth time the descent of the Tartars, he came to say very naturally, "Then I arm my clerks, hoist the consular flag, and 'Bang, bang!' we fire through the windows on the Tartars." On hearing that, the whole club would tremble.

"But then your Tartarin was merely a dreadful liar."

"No! a thousand times, no! Tartarin was no liar."

"Still, he ought to know very well he had not gone to Shanghaï."

"Ah! without doubt he knew it. Only —"

Only listen carefully to this. It is time to understand, once for all, this reputation for lying, that the people of the North have given to the people of the South. There are no liars in the South, no more at Marseilles than at Nîmes, Tarascon, or Toulouse. The man of the South does not lie: he deceives himself. He does not always tell the truth; but he thinks he does. His lie is not a lie: it is a kind of mirage.

Yes, mirage! And, to understand me well, go down South, and you will see. You will see that queer country, where the sun transfigures every thing, and makes every thing preternaturally large. You will see those little hills of Provence, no higher than the Buttes Montmartre, which will seem to you gigantic; you will see the Maison Carrée at Nîmes, — a little gem of a what-not, — which will seem to you as grand as Nôtre Dame; you will see — Ah! the only liar in the South,

if any there be, is the sun : every thing he touches, he exaggerates. What was Sparta in the days of her splendor? A village. What was Athens? At best a subprefecture. And yet in history they appear to us like enormous cities. See what the sun has made of them!

Will you be astonished, after this, that the same sun, falling on Tarascon, has been able to make of a former captain of the wardrobe, like Bravida, the brave commandant Bravida, of a turnip a baobab, and of a man who came near going to Shanghaï, a man who had been there?

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MITAINE MENAGERIE. — AN ATLAS LION AT TARASCON. — TERRIBLE AND SOLEMN INTERVIEW.

And now that we have shown Tartarin of Tarascon as he was in his private life, before glory had kissed his brow, and crowned him with the time-honored laurel; now that we have told of this heroic life in a modest environment, its joys, griefs, dreams, and hopes, — let us hasten to arrive at the great pages of its history, and the singular event which was to give wings to this incomparable destiny.

One evening, at the gunsmith Costecalde's, Tartarin of Tarascon was showing to some amateurs the handling of the needle-gun, then in all its novelty. Suddenly, the door opens, and a cap-hunter rushes wildly into the shop, crying, "A lion, a lion!" General stupefaction, fright, tumult, and jostling followed. Tartarin presents the bayonet; Costecalde runs to shut the door,

The cap-hunter is surrounded, questioned, and pressed; and this is what they learn: the Mitaine menagerie, returning from the fair of Beaucaire, had consented to make a stay of some days at Tarascon, and had just established itself on the Place du Château, with a collection of boas, seals, crocodiles, and a magnificent Atlas lion.

An Atlas lion at Tarascon! Never, within the memory of the oldest inhabitant, had such a thing been seen. How proudly, too, our brave cap-hunters looked at each other! What radiance on their manly countenances! and in every corner of Costecalde's shop, what hearty hand-shakings, silently exchanged! The emotion was so great, so unforeseen, that no one found a word to say.

Not even Tartarin. Pale and trembling, the needle-gun still in his hands, he stood thinking before the counter. An Atlas lion there, close at hand, two steps off! A lion, that is to say, the fierce and heroic beast *par excellence*, the king of animals, the *game* of his dreams, the first actor, as it were, of that ideal troop which played such fine dramas in his imagination.

A lion, ye gods!

And from Atlas, too! It was more than the great Tartarin could stand.

All at once a rush of blood mantled his countenance.

His eyes shot fire. With a convulsive movement, he threw the needle-gun on his shoulder; and, turning toward the brave commandant Bravida, former captain of the wardrobe, he said to him in a voice of thunder, "Let's go and see that, commandant!"

"Halloo, I say! And my gun! My needle-gun you are carrying off!" ventured timidly the prudent Costecalde. But Tartarin had already turned the corner, and after him all the cap-hunters, proudly copying his step.

When they reached the menagerie, there were already many spectators. Tarascon, — heroic race! — too long deprived of sensational spectacles, had rushed upon the Mitaine booth, and carried it by assault. And stout Madam Mitaine was well pleased. In Kabyle costume, — her arms bare to the elbow, iron bracelets on her ankles, a whip in one hand, and in the other a live plucked chicken, — the illustrious lady was doing the honors of the booth; and, as she too had DOUBLE MUSCLES, her success was almost as great as that of her lodgers.

The entrance of Tartarin with the gun on his shoulder acted like a wet blanket.

All those brave Tarasconians who were walking tranquilly before the cages without arms, without distrust, or even any idea of danger, had a feeling of terror, natural enough, on seeing their great Tartarin enter the booth with his formidable engine of war. There was, then, something to fear, since he, this hero — In the twinkling of an eye, all the space before the cages was deserted. The children cried from fear; and the ladies looked toward the door. The apothecary Bézuquet scampered off, saying he was going for his gun.

Gradually, however, Tartarin's attitude restored their courage. Calmly, with head erect, the intrepid Tarasconian slowly made the tour of the booth, passed by the seal's basin without stopping, looked with a contemptuous eye on the long chest, full of bran, where the boa was digesting his raw chicken, and finally planted himself before the lion's cage.

A terrible and solemn interview! — the lion of Tarascon and the lion of Atlas, face to face! On one side, Tartarin erect, his leg outstretched, his two arms leaning on his rifle; on the other, the lion, a gigantic lion, at full length on the straw, with blinking eye, a stupid look, and his enormous yellow-wigged muzzle reposing on his fore-paws, —

both calm, and looking at each other. Strange to say, whether because the needle-gun angered him, or because he scented an enemy of his race, the lion, who till then had looked on the Tarasconians with an air of sovereign contempt, gaping in their faces, suddenly made an angry movement. First, he sniffed, gave a low growl, spread his claws, and stretched out his paws; then, he rose, tossed his head, shook his mane, and, opening an immense jaw, uttered a tremendous roar at Tartarin.

A cry of terror was the answer. Tarascon, crazed with fear, rushed toward the doors; all, — women, children, porters, cap-hunters, the brave commandant Bravida himself. Only Tartarin of Tarascon did not budge. There he was, firm and resolute, before the cage, with lightning in his eyes, making that terrible face with which all the town was familiar. After a moment, when the cap-hunters, somewhat re-assured by his attitude and by the solidity of the bars, approached their chief, they heard him mutter, looking at the lion, "This, yes, this is hunting."

That day Tartarin of Tarascon said no more about it.

CHAPTER IX.

SINGULAR EFFECTS OF MIRAGE.

THAT day Tartarin of Tarascon said no more about it. But the unlucky man had already said too much.

The next day, there was no noise in the town but of Tartarin's near departure for Algeria and lion-hunting. You are all witnesses, dear readers, that the brave man had not breathed a word of this ; but you know — the mirage.

In short, all Tarascon talked only of this departure.

On the promenade, at the club, at Costecalde's, people accosted each other with a wild look.

"And otherwise, you know the news at least ?"

"And otherwise, what now ? Tartarin's departure, at least ?"

For I must tell you that at Tarascon all sentences begin with "and otherwise," [1] which they

[1] "*Et autrement*," which they pronounce "*et autremain*," and end by "*au moins*," which they pronounce "*au mouain*."

pronounce "and otherways," and end by "at least," which they pronounce "at le-ast." Well, that day more than all others, the "at le-asts" and the "otherways" sounded so as to make the windows rattle.

The man in the town who was most surprised to learn he was going to start for Africa was Tartarin. But see what vanity is! Instead of answering simply that he was not going to start at all, that he had never had any idea of going, poor Tartarin, the first time they spoke to him of this journey, said, with a little evasive look, "Eh, eh! perhaps — I don't say" — The second time, a little more familiarized with the idea, he replied, "It is probable;" the third time, "It is certain."

Finally, one evening at the club and at the Costecaldes', carried away by the egg-punch, the bravos, and the lights, and intoxicated by the success which the announcement of his departure had had in the town, the unfortunate man declared solemnly that he was tired of cap-hunting, and was about to go in pursuit of the great Atlas lions.

A tremendous hurrah greeted this declaration; thereupon, fresh egg-punch, hand-shaking, hugging, and serenading by torchlight till midnight, before the little house of the baobab.

Only Tartarin-Sancho was not content. The very idea of an African journey and of lion-hunting set him a-trembling beforehand; and, on returning home, while the serenade of honor was sounding under their windows, he had a fearful scene with Tartarin-Quixote, calling him cracked, visionary, rash, thrice mad, detailing to him piecemeal all the catastrophes which awaited him on this expedition, — shipwrecks, rheumatism, high fevers, dysentery, black plague, elephantiasis, and the rest.

In vain Tartarin-Quixote vowed that he would commit no imprudences, that he would cover himself well, that he would take with him every thing necessary. Tartarin-Sancho would listen to nothing. The poor man saw himself already torn to pieces by lions, or ingulfed in the sands of the desert, like Cambyses of old; but the other Tartarin managed to pacify him a little by explaining to him that it was not to happen immediately, that nothing was pressing, and that, in fine, they had not as yet started.

It is clear enough, indeed, that one does not embark on such an expedition without taking some precautions. One must know where one is going, devil take it! and not fly off like a bird.

Before every thing else, the Tarasconian wanted to read the accounts of the great African travellers, — the narratives of Mungo Park, de Caillé, Dr. Livingstone, and Henri Duverryer.

There he saw that those intrepid travellers, before putting on their sandals for distant excursions, had prepared themselves well beforehand to support hunger, thirst, forced marches, and privations of all kinds. Tartarin wanted to do as they did, and, from that day on, nourished himself on *boiled water* only. What they call *boiled water* at Tarascon, is some slices of bread, drowned in hot water, with a clove of garlic, a little thyme, and a sprig of laurel. The *régime* was severe, as you see; and you may imagine whether poor Sancho made faces or not.

To the *boiled-water* training Tartarin of Tarascon added other sage habits. Thus, to acquire the habit of long walks, he forced himself to make every morning the tour of the town, seven or eight times in succession, — now at a double-quick, and now at the gymnastic pace, his elbows against his body, and two small white pebbles in his mouth, according to the antique mode.

Then, to wont himself to night-cold, fog, and dew, he went down into his garden every evening,

and remained there on the watch till ten or eleven o'clock, behind the baobab.

Finally, as long as the Mitaine menagerie staid at Tarascon, the cap-hunters, belated at Costecalde's, could see in the darkness, passing over the Place du Château, a mysterious man, walking to and fro behind the booth.

It was Tartarin of Tarascon, habituating himself to hear without trembling the lion's roar in the gloomy night.

CHAPTER X.

BEFORE THE START.

While Tartarin was training himself thus by every sort of heroic means, all Tarascon had their eyes on him: they were occupied with nothing else. Cap-hunting flew on one wing, and songs slumbered. In Bézuquet's pharmacy, the piano languished under a green cloth, and the cantharides were drying up above, upside down. Tartarin's expedition had stopped every thing.

You should have seen the Tarasconian's success in the drawing-rooms. They snatched him, disputed for him, borrowed him, and stole him from each other. There was no greater honor for the ladies than to go to the Mitaine menagerie on Tartarin's arm, and to have explained to them, before the lion's cage, how one managed to hunt these grand beasts, where one must aim, at how many paces, whether accidents were numerous, &c.

Tartarin would give all the explanations they

desired. He had read Jules Gérard, and knew lion-hunting to his finger's end, as if he had tried it himself. And he spoke, too, of these things with great eloquence.

But where he appeared at his best was in the evening, dining with President Ladavèze, or with the brave commandant Bravida, former captain of the wardrobe, when the coffee was brought in, and, having drawn their chairs together, they made him talk of his future hunts.

Then, with his elbow on the table-cloth, and his nose in his mocha, the hero would recount, in a voice full of emotion, all the dangers awaiting him over there. He told of the long watches without a moon, of pestilential marshes, of streams poisoned with the leaves of the rose-laurel, of the snows, the burning sun, the scorpions, the showers of locusts; he told, too, of the habits of the great Atlas lions, their mode of combat, their phenomenal strength, and their ferocity in the mating-season.

Then, excited by his own recital, he would rise from the table, bound into the middle of the dining-room, imitating the lion's roar, the sound of the carabine, "Bang, bang!" and the whistling of the explosive bullet, "Whiz, whiz!" gesticulate, roar, and upset the chairs.

Around the table every one was pale. The men would look at each other, and shake their heads; the ladies shut their eyes with little cries of fright; the old men brandish their long canes in a warlike manner; and in the adjoining chambers the little youngsters who are sent to bed early, startled from their sleep by the roaring and gun-shots, would be dreadfully scared, and call for a light.

Meanwhile, Tartarin did not start.

CHAPTER XI.

SWORD-CUTS, GENTLEMEN, SWORD-CUTS, BUT NO PIN-THRUSTS!

HAD he really any intention of starting?—a delicate question, which Tartarin's historian would be much embarrassed to answer.

The truth is, the Mitaine menagerie had left Tarascon more than three months, and the lion-killer did not budge. After all, perhaps the ingenuous hero, blinded by a new mirage, supposed in good faith that he had gone to Algeria. Perhaps, by dint of recounting his future hunting, he imagined that he had done it, as sincerely as he imagined that he had hoisted the consular flag, and fired "Bang, bang!" on the Tartars at Shanghai.

Unfortunately, if Tartarin of Tarascon was this time again the victim of mirage, the Tarasconians were not. When, at the end of three months, they perceived that the hunter had not yet packed a trunk, they began to murmur,

"It will be like Shanghai," Costecalde used to say, smiling. And the gunsmith's remark created a *furore* in the town; for no one believed any longer in Tartarin.

The simple-minded, the poltroons, — folks like Bézuquet, whom a flea would have put to flight, and who could not fire a gun without shutting their eyes, — they, above all, were without pity. At the club, or on the esplanade, they would accost poor Tartarin with little mocking looks, —

"And otherways, how about that journey?"

In Costecalde's shop his opinion was no longer law. The cap-hunters denied their chief.

Epigrams, too, played their part. President Ladavèze, who willingly in his hours of leisure courted with two fingers the Provincial Muse, composed in the vernacular a song which had much success. It was about a certain great hunter, called Master Gervaïs, whose redoubtable gun was to exterminate the last of African lions. Unluckily, this wretched gun was of a singular constitution: it was always loaded, and never went off.

"Never went off!" You understand the allusion?

In a moment this song became popular; and,

when Tartarin passed by, the porters of the quay, the little shoeblacks before his door, would sing in chorus :—

"Lou fusioù de Mestre Gervaï,
Toujou lou cargou ! Toujou lou cargou !
Lou fusioù de Mestre Gervaï,
Toujou lou cargou, part jamaï !"

Only, it was sung at a distance, on account of the double muscles.

O frailty of Tarascon's infatuation ! As for the great man, he pretended to see and to hear nothing ; but, at heart, this petty, underhand, venomous warfare afflicted him greatly. He felt Tarascon slipping from his hand, and popular favor flowing toward others ; and this made him suffer horribly.

Ah ! the great porringer of popularity ! It is good to sit before it ; but what a scalding when it upsets !

In spite of his suffering, Tartarin smiled, and led peacefully the same life, as if nothing were the matter.

Occasionally, however, this mask of gay indifference, which, through pride, he had glued to his countenance, would suddenly fall off : then, instead of laughter, one saw indignation and grief.

So, one morning when the little shoeblacks were singing under his windows, "Lou fusioù de Mestre Gervaï," the voices of these wretches reached the room where the poor great man was in the act of shaving before the glass. (Tartarin wore a full beard; but, as it would grow too long, he was obliged to look after it.)

All at once the window flew up, and Tartarin appeared in shirt-sleeves and night-cap, and daubed with white soap, brandishing his razor and soap-stick, and shouting in a formidable voice: —

"Sword cuts, gentlemen, sword-cuts — but no pin-thrusts!"

Fine words, worthy of history! Their only fault was in being addressed to these little ragamuffins, no taller than their blacking-boxes, and gentlemen utterly incapable of holding a sword!

CHAPTER XII.

OF WHAT WAS SAID IN THE LITTLE HOUSE OF THE BAOBAB.

In the midst of the general defection, the army alone stood by Tartarin.

The brave commandant Bravida, former captain of the wardrobe, continued to show the same esteem for him. "He is a rabbit!" he persisted in saying; and this affirmation was well worth, I take it, that of the apothecary Bézuquet. Not once had the brave commandant alluded to the travels in Africa: however, when the public clamor became too loud, he decided to speak.

One evening unhappy Tartarin was alone in his museum, entertaining sad thoughts, when he saw enter the commandant, grave, in black gloves, and with his coat buttoned up to his ears.

"Tartarin," said the former captain with authority, — "Tartarin, you must start!" And he stood erect in the doorway, stiff and grand as

All that there was in this, "Tartarin, you must start!" Tartarin of Tarascon understood.

Very pale, he arose, looked about him with a tender eye on his pretty museum, so snug, so full of warmth and soft light, the large arm-chair so comfortable, his books, his carpet, and the great white window-shutters behind which waved the slender branches in the little garden; then, advancing toward the brave commandant, he took his hand, squeezed it energetically, and, in a voice mingled with tears, though stoical, however, said to him, "I will start, Bravida!"

And he started, as he had said, only not immediately: he needed time to get his tools.

First, he ordered at Bompard's two large copper-lined trunks, with a long plate bearing this inscription:—

TARTARIN OF TARASCON.

CHEST OF ARMS.

The lining and the engraving took a long time. He ordered, too, at Tastavin's a magnificent travelling-album, to write his journal in and his impressions; for, indeed, even if one goes lion-hunting, one thinks, all the same, on the way.

Then he had sent from Marseilles a whole

cargo of preserved food, pemmican in cakes for *bouillon;* a shelter-tent of a new model, self-pitching and self-striking in a moment; sailor's boots; two umbrellas; a waterproof; and blue goggles to keep off ophthalmia. Lastly, the apothecary Bézuquet put him up a little portable pharmacy, filled with plaster, arnica, camphor, and disinfecting vinegar.

Poor Tartarin! What he did was not for himself; but he hoped, by dint of precautions and delicate attentions, to appease Tartarin-Sancho's fury, who, since their departure had been decided on, ceased not to rage night and day.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE START.

At last arrived the great, the solemn day.

From early dawn all Tarascon was on foot, encumbering the Avignon road and the approach to the little house of the baobab.

People crowded at the windows, on the roofs, and up the trees: — watermen of the Rhone, porters, shoeblacks, bourgeois, women-weavers, taffetas-makers, and the club, in short, the whole town; then, too, people from Beaucaire, who had crossed the bridge; market-gardeners of the suburbs, with great covered carts; vine-growers, mounted on fine mules, bedecked with ribbons, plumes, rattles, knots, and bells; and even, here and there, some pretty girls from Arles, with azure ribbons round their heads, riding behind their beaux, on little iron-gray horses of la Camargue.

All this crowd was thronging and jostling before Tartarin's door, — this good Mr. Tartarin, who was going off to kill lions among the *Turs*.

For Tarascon, Algeria, Africa, Greece, Persia, and Turkey, all form one great and very vague country, almost mythical, and are called the *Turs* (Turks).

In the middle of this throng, the cap-hunters went and came, proud of their chief's triumph, and tracing, as it were, glorious furrows on their way.

Before the house of the baobab were two great trucks. Now and then the gate would open, showing some persons walking gravely in the little garden. Men were bringing the trunks, chests, and travelling-bags, which they piled on the trucks.

At each new piece of baggage the crowd trembled. They named the objects aloud. "That — that's the shelter-tent. Those — those are the potted provisions, the pharmacy, the chests of arms." And the cap-hunters gave explanations.

Suddenly, about ten o'clock, there was a great movement in the crowd. The garden-gate turned violently on its hinges.

"It is he, it is he!" they shouted.

It was he.

When he appeared on the threshold, two cries of amazement burst from the crowd.

"He is a *Tur!*"

"He has goggles!"

Tartarin of Tarascon had indeed thought it his duty, going to Algeria, to adopt the Algerian costume, — large flapping white linen breeches, small waistcoat with metal buttons, two feet of red sash round his stomach, bare neck, shaven forehead, and on his head a gigantic *sheshia* (red cap), with a blue plume of such a length! with that, two heavy guns (one on each shoulder), a long hunting-knife in his belt, at his waist a cartridge-box, and on his hip a revolver, swinging in its leathern pocket. That is all.

Ah! pardon me, I forget the goggles, — an enormous pair of blue goggles, which came quite *à propos* to correct the somewhat too fierce effect of our hero's make-up.

"Long live Tartarin! Hurrah for Tartarin!" shouted the people. The great man smiled, but did not bow, on account of his guns, which were in his way. Besides, he knew now what to think of popular favor. Perhaps, from the bottom of his soul, he was cursing his terrible fellow-citizens, who were forcing him to go away, and to leave his pretty little home with its white walls and green blinds. But this was not seen.

Calm and proud, though a little pale, he advanced on to the road, looked at the trucks, and, seeing that all was right, gayly took the road to the station, without even once turning back toward the house of the baobab. Behind him marched the brave commandant Bravida, former captain of the wardrobe, President Ladavèze, then the gunsmith Costecalde, and all the cap-hunters, then the trucks, and then the people.

Before the station, the station-master awaited him, — an old African of 1830, who shook his hand warmly several times.

The Marseilles Express had not yet arrived. Tartarin and his staff entered the waiting-rooms. To avoid a crowd, the station-master had the gates shut behind them.

During a quarter of an hour, Tartarin paced to and fro in the rooms, among the cap-hunters. He spoke to them of his travels and of his hunting, promising to send them skins. They put their names down on his note-book for a skin, as for a country-dance.

Tranquil and sweet as Socrates at the moment of drinking the hemlock, the intrepid Tarasconian had a word for each, a smile for every one. He spoke simply, with an affable air: one would have

said, that, before going away, he wished to leave behind him, as it were, a train of charms, regrets, and kind memories. Upon hearing their chief speak in this way, all the cap-hunters were in tears: some, among others President Ladavèze and the apothecary Bèzuquet, were even remorseful.

Grooms wept in the corners. Outside, the people looked through the gates, and shouted, "Hurrah for Tartarin!"

At last the bell rang. A heavy rumbling and a piercing whistle shook the vaulted ceiling. "All aboard, all aboard!"

"Good-by, Tartarin! Good-by, Tartarin!"

"Good-by, all!" murmured the great man, and, on the cheeks of the brave commandant Bravida, he kissed his dear Tarascon.

Then he rushed out, and got into a carriage full of Parisian ladies, who thought they should die of fright on seeing this strange man arrive with so many carabines and revolvers.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE PORT OF MARSEILLES. — EMBARK, EMBARK!

On the 1st of December, 186–, at the hour of noon, in the winter sunshine of Provence, clear, bright, splendid weather, the astounded Marseillese saw enter the Canebière a *Tur*, oh, such a *Tur!* Never had they seen one like that; and, yet, Heaven knows if *Turs* are lacking at Marseilles!

The *Tur* in question — need I tell you? — was Tartarin, the great Tartarin of Tarascon, walking along the quays, followed by his chests of arms, his pharmacy, and his provisions, to reach the wharf of the Touache Company and the packet "Zouave," which was to take him over there.

With his ears still full of Tarasconian applause, intoxicated by the brilliancy of the sky and by the salt smell, Tartarin, radiant, walked along, with his guns shouldered, and his head high, looking with all his might at that wonderful port of Marseilles, which he saw for the first time, and which dazzled him. The poor man thought he was

dreaming. It seemed to him he was called Sindbad the Sailor, and that he was wandering in one of those fantastic cities, such as there are in the Thousand and One Nights.

As far as the eye could reach, was a confusion of masts and yards, crossing each other in every direction; flags of all countries, Russian, Greek, Swedish, Tunisian, and American; vessels close to the quay, with their bowsprits projecting over the shore, like rows of bayonets; underneath, naïads, goddesses, Holy Virgins, and other painted wooden sculptures, which give the names to the vessels, all eaten by the salt water, worn, dripping, and mouldy. Now and then, between the vessels, lay a bit of sea, like a great sheet of mohair stained with oil. In the entanglement of yards, were flocks of sea-gulls, making pretty spots against the blue sky, and deck-hands, calling to each other in all tongues.

On the quay, in the middle of gutters leading from the soap-works, green, thick, and blackish, and filled with oil and soda, were a whole population of custom-house officers, *commissionaires*, and porters with their *bogheys* drawn by little Corsican horses.

Then, there were queer clothing-stores, and

smoky booths, where sailors were doing their cooking; pipe-sellers, venders of monkeys and parrots, of rope, canvas, and fantastic bric-a-brac, among which were displayed pell-mell old culverins, large gilded lanterns, old tackle, old flukeless anchors, old cordage, old pulleys, old speaking-trumpets, and marine spectacles of the time of Jean-Bart and Duguay-Trouin. Women were selling mussels and prawns, squatting, and crying shrilly, beside their shell-fish. Sailors were passing, with pots of tar, smoking saucepans, and great baskets full of molluscs, which they were going to wash in the whitish water of the fountains.

Everywhere there was a prodigious huddle of every sort of merchandise: silk-stuffs, ore, rafts of wood, pigs of lead, cloth, sugar, carob-beans, rape-seed, licorice, and sugar-cane, — the East and the West pell-mell, — and great piles of Dutch cheeses, which Genoese women were dyeing red with their hands.

Near by was the grain-quay, with porters discharging their sacks on to the quay from the top of high scaffoldings, and with the grain a golden torrent, rolling in the midst of light smoke, and with men in red fezzes, sifting it by measure in large sieves of ass-hide, and loading it on carts,

which went off, followed by a regiment of women and children, with short brooms and gleaning-baskets. Further on was the careening-basin, with great vessels lying on their sides, and being scorched with brush-wood, to clean off the sea-weed, and their yards dipping in the water: all amidst the smell of tar, and the deafening noise of carpenters sheathing the ships' hulls with great sheets of copper.

Occasionally, between the masts, was a clear space. Then Tartarin saw the entrance of the port, the great going and coming of ships, and an English frigate starting for Malta, showy and well-washed, and with officers in yellow gloves; or else a large Marseilles brig, weighing anchor amid cries and oaths, with the captain aft, in frock-coat and silk hat, issuing orders in Provençal; ships going rapidly off, under full sail, and others far off, very far, arriving slowly in the sunshine, as if in air.

Then, all the time, there was a terrible row, rumbling of carts, "Haul away!"'s from the sailors, oaths, songs, steamboat-whistles, drums and trumpets from fort St. Jean and fort St. Nicolas, and the bells of la Majore, les Accoules, and Saint Victor; and, above all this, the mistral, which

took up all these sounds, all these clamors, rolled them, shook them, confounded them with its own voice, and made wild music of them, savage and heroic, like the great din of travel, a din which gave one a longing to go away, far away, — to have wings.

It was to the sound of this beautiful din that the intrepid Tartarin of Tarascon embarked for the country of lions!

EPISODE II. AMONG THE *TURS.*

CHAPTER I.

THE VOYAGE ACROSS. — THE SHESHIA'S FIVE POSITIONS. — THE EVENING OF THE THIRD DAY. — MERCY!

I SHOULD like, my dear readers, to be a painter, and a great painter, to put before your eyes, at the head of this second episode, the five different positions taken by Tartarin of Tarascon's *sheshia* (red cap), in the three days' trip it made on board the "Zouave," between France and Algeria.

I should first show it to you at the start, on deck, heroic and superb, as it was, placed like a halo, on that fine Tarasconian head. I should next show it to you at the mouth of the harbor, when the "Zouave" begins to caracole on the waves: I should show it to you trembling, aston-

ished, and feeling, as it were, already the first qualms of its sickness.

Then, in the Gulf du Lion, as they advance into the open sea, and it becomes rougher, I should make you see it struggling against the tempest, standing wildly up on the hero's cranium, and its large blue woollen tassel bristling up in the sea-fog and squalls. Fourth position : six in the evening, in sight of the Corsican coast; the unfortunate *sheshia* leans over the quarter-netting, and looks, lamenting, at the bottom of the sea. Lastly, fifth and final position : at the end of a narrow state-room, in a small berth, which looks like a bureau-drawer, something shapeless and disconsolate rolls groaning on the pillow. It is the *sheshia*, the heroic *sheshia* of the start, now reduced to the vulgar condition of a night-cap, and pulled over the ears of a pale, convulsed sick man.

Ah ! if the Tarasconians could have seen their great Tartarin lying in his bureau-drawer, in the wan, sad light which fell through the port-holes, amid that sickly smell of cooking and wet wood, and the disheartening odor of the packet; had they heard his throat rattle at each turn of the screw, his demands for tea every five minutes, and his cursing the steward in a small, child's voice,

how angry they would have been with themselves for having obliged him to go off. Upon my word as historian! the poor *Tur* was pitiable. Surprised suddenly by sickness, the poor wretch had not had the courage to undo his Algerian belt, nor to extricate himself from his arsenal. The big-handled hunting-knife was breaking his chest, and the leathern revolver-pocket was murdering his legs. To finish him, there was the grumbling of Tartarin-Sancho, who ceased not to groan and to whine:

"Imbecile, there now! I told thee well! Ah! Thou hast wished to go to Africa. Well now! There's thy Africa! How dost thou like it?"

What was most cruel was that from the depths of his stateroom and groans, the unhappy wretch heard the passengers in the saloon laughing, eating, singing, and playing cards. The company was as merry as numerous on board the "Zouave:" officers rejoining their corps, ladies of the Alcazar of Marseilles, coasting sailors, a rich Mussulman returning from Mecca, and a Montenegrin prince, a great wag, who gave imitations of Ravel and Gil Pérès. Not one of those people was sea-sick; and their time was passed in champagne-drinking with the captain of the "Zouave," a jolly

good fellow from Marseilles, who kept house at Algiers and at Marseilles, and answered to the merry name of Barbassou.

Tartarin of Tarascon was enraged with all these wretches. Their gaiety redoubled his sickness.

At last, on the afternoon of the third day, there was on board ship an extraordinary movement, which awoke our hero from his long torpor. The forward bell was ringing.

Big sailor's boots were heard running on the deck.

"Forward! Back!" shouted Capt. Barbassou's hoarse voice.

Then "Stop!" then a short stop, a shock, and nothing more — nothing but the packet rocking silently from right to left, like a balloon in mid-air.

This strange silence terrified the Tarasconian.

"Mercy! We are sinking!" he cried in a terrible voice; and, recovering his strength, as if by magic, he leapt from his couch, and rushed on to the deck with his arsenal.

CHAPTER II.

TO ARMS! TO ARMS!

THEY were not sinking, but arriving.

The "Zouave" had just entered the roads, beautiful roads with deep black waters, but silent, mournful, and almost deserted. On a hill opposite, lay White Algiers, with its little dead-white houses, which extend down to the sea, crowding against each other: a washerwoman's display on the slope of Mendon. Overhead was a great blue satin sky, oh! so blue!

The illustrious Tartarin, recovering a little from his fright, gazed upon the landscape, listening with respect to the Montenegrin prince, who, standing by his side, named off to him the different quarters of the town, the Casbah, the upper town and Bab-Azoun street. Very well-bred was this Montenegrin prince; moreover, thoroughly acquainted with Algeria, and speaking Arabic fluently. Therefore Tartarin proposed to cultivate his acquaintance. All at once, along the quarter-net-

ting, against which they were leaning, the Tarasconian perceives a row of big black hands, which hang on from the outside. Almost immediately a negro's woolly head confronts him; and, before he has had time to open his mouth, the deck is overrun in every direction by a hundred yellow and black pirates, half-naked, thick-lipped, hideous, and terrible.

These corsairs Tartarin knew. It was they, that is to say *they*, those famous *they*, that he had so often sought at night in the streets of Tarascon. At last *they* had decided, then, to come.

At first, surprise nailed him to the spot. But, when he saw the corsairs rush on the baggage, jerk off the canvas which covered it, and begin, in short, the pillage of the ship, then the hero roused himself, and, unsheathing his hunting knife, "To arms! To arms!" he shouted to the passengers; and, the first of all, he fell upon the pirates.

"*Ques aco?* What is it? What's the matter with you?" said Capt. Barbassou, who was coming up from between-decks.

"Ah! there you are, captain! Quick! Quick! Arm your men."

"Eh! What for, *bonn Diou?*"[1]

[1] Bad French for "Good God!" — ED.

"You don't see them?"

"See what?"

"There — before you — the pirates" —

Capt. Barbassou looked at him, utterly dumfounded. Just then a great rascal of a negro passed before them, running off with the hero's pharmacy on his back:

— "Wretch! Await me!" roared the Tarasconian; and he rushed after, with his dagger drawn.

Barbassou caught him on the fly, and, holding him back by the belt, said: "Keep easy now, *tron de ler!* These are not pirates. There have been no pirates for a long time. These are porters."

"Porters!"

"Why, yes! Porters coming to look after the baggage, to carry it ashore. Put up your cutlass, now, give me your ticket, and walk after this negro, a good fellow, who is going to take you ashore, and even to the hotel, if you wish!"

A little confused, Tartarin gave up his ticket, and, following the negro, got down by the entering-ropes into a large boat, which was dancing alongside the ship. All his luggage was already there, his trunks, chests of arms, and potted provisions; as they filled the whole boat, there was

no need to wait for other passengers. The negro climbed on to the trunks, and squatted there like an ape, with his knees in his hands. Another negro took the oars. Both stared at Tartarin, grinning and showing their white teeth.

Standing in the stern, with that terrible face which was the terror of his fellow-countrymen, the great Tarasconian played feverishly with the handle of his cutlass; for, in spite of what Barbassou might have told him, he was but half re-assured as to the intentions of these ebony-skinned porters, who resembled so little the worthy porters of Tarascon.

Five minutes later, the boat landed, and Tartarin set foot on that little Barbary quay, where, three hundred years before, a Spanish galley-slave named Michael Cervantes prepared — under the rod of the Algerian galley-captain — a sublime romance, which was to be "Don Quixote"!

CHAPTER III.

INVOCATION TO CERVANTES. — DISEMBARKING. — WHERE ARE THE TURS? — NO TURS. — DISILLUSION.

O MICHAEL CERVANTES SAAVEDRA, if what they say is true, that in the places where the great have dwelt, something of themselves wanders and floats in the air, to the end of ages, what remained of thee on the Barbary coast, must have been thrilled with joy on seeing disembark Tartarin of Tarascon, that marvellous type of the Southern Frenchman, in whom had been incarcerated the two heroes of thy book, Don Quixote and Sancho Panza.

The air was warm that day. On the quay, flooded with sunshine, were five or six custom-house officers, Algerians waiting for news from France, some Moors squatting and smoking their long pipes, and Maltese sailors hauling in great nets, where thousands of sardines shone between the meshes, like little silver bits. But scarcely had

Tartarin set foot on shore, when the quay became animated, and changed its aspect. A band of savages, still more hideous than the pirates on the boat, arose from between the stones of the beach, and rushed upon the new-comer. Tall, naked Arabs under woollen blankets, little Moors in rags, Negroes, Tunisians, Mahonians, M'zabites, and hotel-waiters in white aprons, all shouting, yelling, grasping his clothes, and disputing for his baggage, one carrying off his provisions, another his pharmacy, and, in a fantastic jargon, hurling at his head outlandish names of hotels.

Stunned by all this tumult, Tartarin went to and fro, cursing and fuming, struggling, and running after his baggage; and, not knowing how to make himself understood by these barbarians, harangued them in French, in Provençal, and even in Latin, Pourceaugnac's Latin — *Rosa*, the rose, *bonus, bona, bonum*, all he knew. Pains lost: he was not listened to. Fortunately, a little man, dressed in a yellow-collared tunic, and armed with a long walking-stick, interfered, like one of Homer's gods, in the *mêlée*, and dispersed the whole rabble with blows. It was an Algerian policeman. Very politely he urged Tartarin to go to the Hôtel de l'Europe, and confided him to the

waiters of the place, who took him off, bag and baggage, in several trucks.

At the first step he took in Algiers, Tartarin of Tarascon opened his eyes wide. Beforehand, he had imagined an Oriental city, fairylike and mythical, something between Constantinople and Zanzibar. He fell into the middle of Tarascon, — cafés, restaurants, wide streets, four-story houses, a little macadamized square, where musicians of the line were playing Offenbach's polkas, gentlemen on chairs, drinking beer with *échaudés*,[1] ladies, some grisettes, and then military men, still military men, always military men, — and not one *Tur!* There were none but himself. Then, in crossing the square, he felt a little uncomfortable. Every one stared at him. The musicians of the line stopped; and Offenbach's polka stood still, with one foot in the air.

With the two guns shouldered, and with the revolver on his hip, fierce and majestic as Robinson Crusoe, Tartarin passed gravely through the midst of the groups; but, on arriving at the hotel, his strength left him. The start from Tarascon, the port of Marseilles, the voyage across, the Montenegrin prince, and the pirates, were all in a

[1] A kind of cake.

whirl of confusion in his head. He had to be taken up to his chamber, disarmed, and undressed. Already even, they were talking of sending for the doctor; but, no sooner was he on his pillow, than the hero began to snore so loud and heartily, that the landlord deemed the aid of science unnecessary, and every one discreetly retired.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FIRST WATCH.

THREE o'clock was striking on the Government-clock, when Tartarin awoke. He had slept all the evening, all night, all the morning, and even a good bit of the afternoon. I must say, though, that for three days the *sheshia* had seen hard times!

The hero's first thought, on opening his eyes, was this: "I am in the lion-country!" And, bless me! why not tell? at this idea that the lions were there, close by, two steps off, and almost in his hands, and that he must soon have a brush with them, brrr! a mortal chill seized him, and he buried himself intrepidly under the blankets.

But, in a moment, the cheerfulness outdoors, the sky so blue, the bright sunshine streaming into his room, a nice little breakfast that he had served in bed, and his window wide open toward the sea, the whole washed down with an excellent flagon of Crescia wine, quickly restored to him his former

heroism: "To the lion! To the lion!" cried he, throwing off the blankets; and he dressed briskly.

This is the plan he had: to sally forth from the town without saying a word to anybody, launch himself into the open desert, await the night, get into ambush, and at the first lion which should pass, bang! bang! Then to return to breakfast the next morning at the Hotel de l'Europe, receive the congratulations of the Algerians, and hire a cart to bring the animal home.

So he armed himself hastily, rolled up on his back the shelter-tent, with its long pole sticking up a good foot above his head, and, stiff as a poker, went down into the street. There, unwilling to ask his way of anybody, for fear of awakening suspicion as to his projects, he turned squarely to the right, went to the end of the Bab-Azoun arcades, where, from the depths of their black shops, knots of Algerian Jews watched him pass, lurking in their corners like spiders; he crossed the *Place du Théâtre*, took the faubourg, and, at last, the dusty Mustapha highway.

There was on this road a strange confusion of omnibuses, *fiacres*, corricolos, freight-cars, great hay-carts drawn by oxen, squads of African *chasseurs*, troops of microscopic donkeys, negresses

selling galettes, Alsacian emigrant-wagons, and spahis in red cloaks, all going along in a whirlwind of dust, in the midst of cries, songs, and trumpets, between two rows of villainous booths, where were seen tall Mahonian women combing their hair before their doors, taverns full of soldiers, and the shops of butchers and horseflesh-dealers.

"What nonsense don't they talk about their East?," thought the great Tartarin, "There aren't even as many *Turs* as at Marseilles."

All at once he saw passing near him, stretching his long legs, and swelling like a turkey, a superb camel. That made his heart beat.

Camels already! The lions could not be far off; and indeed, within five minutes, he saw, coming toward him with guns shouldered, a whole troop of lion-hunters.

"The cowards!" said our hero to himself, as he passed by them, "the cowards! To go after the lion in bands and with dogs!" For it never would have occurred to him that in Algeria one could hunt any thing but lions. Still, these hunters had such good-natured faces of retired merchants, and then this way of hunting lions with dogs and game-bags was so patriarchal, that the Tarasconian, a little puzzled, thought he ought to accost one of these gentlemen.

"And otherways, comrade, good luck?"

"Not bad," answered the other, looking with a bewildered eye on the very considerable armament of the warrior of Tarascon.

"You have killed some?"

"Yes, indeed — fair luck — look for yourself" — and the Algerian hunter showed his game-bag. stuffed full of rabbits and woodcock.

"How's that? Your game-bag? You put 'em in your game-bag?"

"Why! Where would you have me put them?"

"But then they're — they're quite small" —

"Small and big," said the hunter. And, as he was in a hurry to return home, he rejoined his companions with long strides.

The intrepid Tartarin stood rooted with amazement, in the middle of the road. Then, after a moment's reflection: "Bah!" said he, "they're humbugs: they've killed nothing at all." And he continued on his way.

Already the houses became scarcer, and the passers-by also. Night fell, and objects became dim. Tartarin of Tarascon walked on half an hour longer. At last he stopped — it was quite dark: a starry night, without a moon, and no one on the road. In spite of all, the hero reflected

that lions were not stage-coaches, and would not voluntarily follow the highway. He set out across-lots. At every step there were ditches, brambles, and underbrush. No matter! On he walked steadily. Then, all at once, halt! "There is lion in the air hereabouts," said our man to himself; and he sniffed hard right and left.

CHAPTER V.

BANG! BANG!

It was a great wild desert, all bristling with strange plants, those Oriental plants which look like evil beasts. In the modest starlight, their exaggerated shadows spread in every direction. To the right, was the confused, heavy mass of a mountain, Atlas perhaps! To the left, the invisible sea, rolling sullenly. 'Twas just the haunt to tempt wild beasts.

With one gun before him, and another in his hands, Tartartin of Tarascon kneeled on one knee, and waited. He waited one hour, two hours. Nothing! Then he recollected that, in his books, the great lion-killers never went hunting without bringing with them a little kid, which they would tie a few steps before them, and make bleat, by pulling its paw with a string. Having no kid, the Tarasconian thought he would try imitation, and set himself a-bleating in a goatish voice: Be-eh! Be-eh!

At first, very softly, because, at the bottom of his soul, he was all the while somewhat afraid lest the lion should hear him. Then, seeing nothing come, he bleated louder: Be-eh! — Be-e-e-eh! — Again, nothing! Out of patience, he began again in yet finer style, and several times in succession: "Be-eh! — Be-e-eh! — Be-e-e-eh!" — with such vigor that the kid became almost an ox.

All at once, a few steps before him, something black and gigantic loomed up. He was silent. It stooped, sniffed the ground, capered, rolled about, galloped off, then returned, and stopped short: it was the lion, beyond all manner of doubt! Now you could see distinctly his four short paws, his formidable mien, and two eyes, two great eyes glittering in the darkness. — Aim! Fire! Bang! Bang! — It was done. Then, at once, came a leap backward, with hunting-knife in hand.

The Tarasconian's shot was answered by a terrific howling.

"He has it!" cried the good Tartarin; and, gathered up on his sturdy legs, he prepared to receive the beast; but it had had more than it cared for, and fled at a triple gallop, howling. He, however, did not budge. He was waiting for the female, — according to his books!

Unluckily, the female did not come. At the end of two or three hours' waiting, the Tarasconian grew weary. The ground was damp, the night becoming cool, and the sea-breeze sharp.

"What, if I were to take a nap, while waiting for daylight?" said he to himself; and, to avoid rheumatism, he had recourse to the shelter-tent. But that was the devil of it! This shelter-tent was made on a system so ingenious, so very ingenious, that he never could manage to open it.

In vain he tugged and sweated for an hour. The wretched tent did not open. (There are umbrellas which, when it rains bucketfuls, amuse themselves by playing you such tricks.) Weary of the struggle, the Tarasconian threw the contrivance down, and lay on it, cursing like the true Provençal he was.

"Ta, ta, ra, ta, Tarata!"

"Quès aco? What is that?" said Tartarin, waking up with a start.

It was the clarions of the African Chasseurs, sounding the reveille in the barracks of Mustapha. The lion-killer, amazed, rubbed his eyes, — he who believed himself in the open desert! Do you know where he was? In a large bed of artichokes, between a bed of cabbages and a bed of beets.

His Sahara had vegetables! Quite near him, on the pretty, green slope of upper Mustapha, Algerian villas, all white, were shining in the dew of early dawn. One would have believed himself in the environs of Marseilles, among the country-seats and cottages.

The well-to-do, kitchen-garden physiognomy of this sleeping landscape, much astonished the poor man, and put him in very bad humor.

"These people are crazy," said he to himself, "to plant their artichokes in the lion's neighborhood — for, indeed, I have not been dreaming. The lions come as far as this — there's the proof."

The proof was some spots of blood that the beast, as it fled, had left behind. Stooping over this bloody trail, his eye on the watch, his revolver in hand, the valiant Tarasconian, following artichoke after artichoke, reached a little field of oats, with trodden grass, a pool of blood, and in the middle of the pool, lying on its side, with a large wound in its head, a — What do you think?

A lion, of course!

No! an ass, one of those tiny asses so common in Algeria, and called there by the name of *bourriquots*.

CHAPTER VI.

ARRIVAL OF THE FEMALE. — TERRIBLE COMBAT. — THE RENDEZVOUS OF RABBITS.

TARTARIN'S first feeling at the aspect of his unfortunate victim was one of vexation. There is, to be sure, such a distance between a lion and a *bourriquot!* His second feeling was entirely of pity. The poor *bourriquot* was so pretty; he had such an innocent look! The hide on his flanks, still warm, was rising and falling, like a wave. Tartarin kneeled down, and, with the end of his Algerian belt, tried to stanch the blood of the unfortunate brute: and this great man nursing this little ass was the most touching thing you can imagine.

At the silky contact of the belt, the *bourriquot*, who still had two farthings' worth of life, opened his large gray eye, and flapped his long ears two or three times, as if to say "Thanks! Thanks!" Then, a final convulsion shook him from head to tail; and he stirred no more.

"Noiraud! Noiraud!" cried all at once a voice choked with anguish. At the same time, in a neighboring copse, the branches moved. Tartarin had only time to rise and to put himself on his guard. It was the female!

She arrived, terrible and roaring, in the form of an old Alsacian woman in a kerchief, armed with a great red umbrella, and demanding her ass of all the echoes of Mustapha. Surely, it would have been better for Tartarin to deal with an enraged lioness, than with this wicked old hag. Vainly did the unlucky man endeavor to make her comprehend how the thing had happened, that he had taken Noiraud for a lion. The old dame thought she was being mocked at; and, uttering energetic "Devil!"s, she fell upon the hero with her umbrella. Tartarin, a little confused, defended himself as best he could, parried the blows with his carabine, sweated, puffed, and jumped about, crying: "But, Madam! — But, Madam!" —

Go to! Madam was deaf, and her vigor proved it.

Luckily, a third individual arrived on the battle-field. It was the Alsacian's husband, an Alsacian himself and inn-keeper, furthermore a good business-man. When he saw with whom he had to

deal, and that the assassin only asked to pay the price of the victim, he disarmed his spouse, and there was an understanding.

Tartarin gave two hundred francs. The ass was worth fully ten : that is the current price of *bourriquots* in the Arab markets. Then they buried poor Noiraud under a fig-tree, and the Alsacian, put in good humor by the color of the Tarasconian *douros*, invited the hero to come and break a crust with him at the inn, which was a few steps off, on the side of the highway.

The Algerian hunters used to come there to breakfast every Sunday : for the plain was full of game, and, for two leagues around the town, there was no better place for rabbits.

"And the lions ?" asked Tartarin.

The Alsacian looked at him, much astonished : "Lions ?"

"Yes — lions : do you see them now and then ?" resumed the poor man, with a little less assurance.

The inn-keeper burst out laughing.

"Well ! Good gracious ! — Lions ? What for ?"

"Then there are none in Algeria ?"

"Bless me ! I have never seen any, though it is twenty years I've been living in this province. However, I rather think I have heard say — it

seems to me the papers — but it is much further, over there, down South."

By this time, they were near the tavern, — a suburban tavern, such as one sees at Vanves or Pantin, with a faded branch over the door, billiard-cues painted on the wall, and this inoffensive sign :

AU RENDEZ-VOUS DES LAPINS.

The Rendervous of *Rabbits!* O Bravida, what a souvenir !

CHAPTER VII.

STORY OF AN OMNIBUS, A MOORISH LADY, AND A GARLAND OF JESSAMINES.

THIS first adventure would have been enough to discourage many people; but men of Tartarin's stamp do not allow themselves to be easily put down.

"The lions are down South," thought the hero. "Well, I'll go South."

And, as soon as he had swallowed his last morsel, he rose, thanked his host, kissed the old woman without rancor, wept a parting tear over the unfortunate Noiraud, and speedily returned to Algiers, with the firm intention of strapping up his trunks and of starting that very day for the South.

Unfortunately, the highway to Mustapha seemed to have lengthened since the evening: there was such a sun, and such dust, — and the shelter-tent was so heavy! Tartarin had not the courage to go on to the city afoot; and so, hailing the first omnibus that passed, he got in.

Ah! poor Tartarin of Tarascon! How much better would he have done for his name, and for his glory, not to enter that fatal stage-coach, but to continue on his way afoot, — at the risk of falling, asphyxiated by the weight of the atmosphere, of the shelter-tent, and of his heavy double-barrelled, rifled guns.

When Tartarin had got in, the omnibus was full. At the further end, with his nose buried in his breviary, there was a black-bearded Algerian curate; opposite, a young Moorish merchant, smoking big cigarettes; then, a Maltese sailor, and four or five Moorish ladies in white linen masks, of whom nothing but their eyes could be seen. These ladies had just been paying their devotions in the Abd-el-Kader cemetery; but this funereal visit did not seem to have saddened them. They were laughing and chatting together, under their masks, and munching pastry.

Tartarin thought he perceived them looking at him a good deal. One above all, the one seated opposite him, had fixed her gaze upon him, and did not withdraw it all the way. Though the lady was veiled, the vivacity of that large, black eye, lengthened by *k'hol,* a lovely, delicate wrist, loaded with gold bracelets, which one saw here and there

through the veils, — every thing, the sound of her voice, the graceful, almost childlike movements of her head, told of something young, pretty, and adorable, behind. The unhappy Tartarin knew not where to hide himself. The mute caress of those beautiful Oriental eyes troubled him, agitated him, annihilated him: he was hot and he was cold.

To finish him, the lady's slipper came into play: on his big hunting-boots he felt it running, that darling slipper, running and frisking like a little red mouse. What should he do? Respond to this gaze, this pressure? Yes; but the consequences? A love-affair in the East is something terrible! — and, with his romantic Southern imagination, the brave Tarasconian saw himself falling into the hands of eunuchs, or, better yet perhaps, sewed up in a leathern sack, and rolling on the sea, with his head beside him. That cooled him down a little. Meanwhile, the little slipper was continuing its work, and the eyes opposite were opened quite wide toward him, like two dark velvety flowers, seeming to say, "Gather us!"

The omnibus stopped. They were on the Place du Théâtre, at the beginning of Bab-Azoun Street. One by one, encumbered by their loose trousers,

and drawing their veils about them with a wild grace, the Moorish ladies got down. Tartarin's neighbor rose the last; and, as she rose, her face passed so near the hero's, that her breath fanned it, a genuine bouquet of youth and freshness, with I know not what after-odor of jessamine, musk, and pastry.

The Tarasconian did not resist. Madly in love, and ready for any thing, he started after the Moorish lady. At the sound of his leathern belt, she turned round, put a finger on her mask, as if to say "hush! hush!," and quickly with her other hand threw him a little perfumed garland of jessamines. Tartarin of Tarascon stooped to pick it up; but, as our hero was a trifle heavy, and much loaded with arms, the operation was rather long.

When he rose again, with the garland of jessamines against his heart — the Moorish lady had disappeared.

CHAPTER VIII.

LIONS OF ATLAS, SLEEP!

LIONS of Atlas, sleep! Sleep tranquilly in the depths of your retreats, among the aloes and wild cactuses. For some days yet, Tartarin of Tarascon will not slaughter you. For the time being, all his implements of war — chests of arms, pharmacy, shelter-tent, and potted provisions, — repose peacefully, packed up, at the Hôtel de l'Europe, in one corner of room 36.

Sleep without fear, great tawny lions! The Tarasconian is seeking his Moorish lady. Since the adventure in the omnibus, the unhappy man seems to feel perpetually, on his foot, his vast, trapper's foot, the frisking of the little red mouse; and the sea-breeze, kissing his lips, is always perfumed — whatever the weather may be — with a lovable odor of pastry and anise.

He must have his Maugrabin lady! He will have her! He shall have her!

It is no slight matter, however, to find in a

city of a hundred thousand souls a person whom one knows only by her breath, her slippers, and the color of her eyes: none but a Tarasconian, smitten with love, would be capable of attempting such an adventure.

The terrible fact is that, under their great white masks, all Moorish ladies look alike. Then, these ladies scarcely go out; and, when one wants to see them, he must go up into the upper town, the Arab town, the town of the *Turs*.

A genuine cut-throat place is this upper town, with little black alleys, very narrow, climbing up a precipitous slope, between two rows of mysterious houses, whose roofs meet, and form a tunnel, with low doors, and little bits of windows, silent, sad, and barred; and then, right and left, a heap of very gloomy stalls, where pirate-headed *Turs*— with white eyes and brilliant teeth — smoke long pipes, and converse in a low voice, as if plotting evil deeds.

To say that our Tartarin passed without fear through this formidable city, would be a falsehood. On the contrary, he was much agitated; and, in those narrow alleys, whose whole width was taken up by his expansive abdomen, the brave man advanced only with the greatest precaution, his

eyes on the look-out, and his finger on the trigger of his revolver: just as at Tarascon, on going to the club. Every moment he expected to have at his back a rush of eunuchs and janissaries; but the desire to see his lady again gave him the strength and courage of a giant.

For a week, the intrepid Tartarin did not quit the upper town. Now he was seen, standing like a statue, before the Moorish Baths, waiting for the hour when these ladies come forth in companies, shivering, and feeling their bath; now he would appear squatting at the doors of the mosques, sweating and puffing, to take off his great boots before entering the sanctuary.

Now and then, at nightfall, when he was returning heart-broken at having discovered nothing, either at the bath or at the mosque, the Tarasconian, in passing before the Moorish houses, would hear monotonous singing, stifled sounds of guitars, the rolling of tabors, and little feminine laughs, which would make his heart beat.

"She is there, perhaps!" he would say to himself.

Then, if the street was deserted, he would approach one of these houses, raise the heavy knocker of the low back-door, and knock timidly.

Immediately the singing and laughter would cease; and nothing would be heard behind the wall, except vague whispers, as in a sleeping aviary.

"Let us stand firm!" the hero would say to himself, "something is going to happen to me!"

What happened to him most often, was a big bucket of cold water on the head, or else orange-peels and Barbary-figs — never any thing more serious.

Lions of Atlas, sleep!

CHAPTER IX.

PRINCE GREGORY OF MONTENEGRO.

For two long weeks the unfortunate Tartarin was seeking his Algerian lady; and very likely he would be seeking her yet, had not the Providence of lovers come to his aid, in the shape of a Montenegrin gentleman. It was under the following circumstances.

In winter, every Saturday night, the Grand Theatre of Algiers gives its masked ball, nothing more nor less than the Opera. It is the everlasting and insipid provincial masked ball:—few people in the hall, some strays from Bullier or the Casino, foolish maidens following the army, faded swells, lightermen in distress, and five or six little Mahonian laundresses, who "cut a dash," but retain from their days of innocence a vague perfume of garlic and saffron sauce. But the real thing to see is not there: it is in the *foyer*, transformed for the occasion into a gambling-saloon. A feverish and motley crowd jostle about the long green table-

cloths; there are *Turcos* on leave, staking borrowed two-sou bits, Moorish merchants from the upper town, negroes, Maltese, and colonists from the interior, who have come forty leagues to risk on an ace the value of a plough or of a pair of oxen, — all trembling and pale, with teeth set, and with that singular, gambler's look, so troubled and askant, that has become a squint, by dint of staring always at the same card.

Further on, are tribes of Algerian Jews, gambling *en famille*. The men have the Oriental costume hideously combined with blue socks and with velvet caps. The women, bloated and wan, stand stiffly in their tight-fitting gold plastrons. Grouped about the tables, the whole tribe scold, consult together, count on their fingers, and play but little. From time to time only, after long confabulations, some old patriarch, with a reverend saint's beard, steps forth, and ventures the family douro. Then, as long as the game lasts, there is a scintillation of Hebrew eyes turned toward the table, terrible, black, magnetic eyes, which make the gold pieces dance on the cloth, and end by drawing them in slowly as by a thread.

Then followed quarrels, battles, oaths of all countries, wild cries in all tongues, unsheathing of

knives, the *gendarme* coming up, and money missing!

It was in the midst of these Saturnalia that the great Tartarin had just strayed one evening, to seek oblivion and peace of mind.

The hero was going about alone, in the crowd, thinking, in spite of all, of his Moorish lady, when, all at once, at a gaming-table, above the cries and the clink of gold, two angry voices arose:

"I tell you I find twenty francs missing, Sir!"

"Sir!"

"What?—Sir!"

"Learn to whom you are talking, Sir!"

"I ask for nothing better, Sir!"

"I am Prince Gregory of Montenegro, Sir!"

At the sound of this name, Tartarin, quite excited, broke through the crowd, and placed himself in the front rank, proud and glad to find his prince again, this very polite Montenegrin prince, with whom he had scraped acquaintance on board the packet. Unfortunately, this title of Highness, which had so dazzled the good Tarasconian, did not produce the slightest impression on the officer of the Chasseurs, with whom the prince was having his altercation.

"That helps me a lot,"—said the military man

sneeringly; then, turning toward the gallery, "Gregory of Montenegro? Who knows *him?*— Nobody!"

Tartarin indignantly made a step forward.

"Pardon me! I know the prëince!" said he, in a very firm voice and his finest Tarasconian accent.

The officer of the Chasseurs looked at him a moment full in the face, and then, shrugging his shoulders, said:

"Oh! all right! Divide the twenty francs missing, and let there be no more question about it."

Thereupon he turned his back, and was lost in the crowd.

The fiery Tartarin wished to rush after him; but the prince held him back.

"Let him go. I will settle that matter."

And, taking the Tarasconian by the arm, he dragged him out rapidly.

As soon as they were on the Place, Prince Gregory of Montenegro took off his hat, offered his hand to our hero, and, vaguely recalling his name, began in a thrilling voice:

"Mr. Barbarin"—

"Tartarin," murmured the other timidly.

"Tartarin, Barbarin, no odds! We're friends, now, for life or death!"

And the noble Montenegrin shook his hand with fierce energy. You may imagine how proud the Tarasconian was.

"Preïnce!—Preïnce!," he repeated with intoxication.

A quarter of an hour later, these two gentlemen were installed at the restaurant of the Plane-trees, an agreeable evening-resort, with terraces plunging into the sea; and before a strong Russian salad, washed down with a pleasant Crescia wine, they renewed acquaintance.

You cannot imagine any thing more seductive than this Montenegrin prince, who was slender, delicate, curly-haired (by the use of tongs!), smooth-shaven, and bespangled with queer orders, who had a sly eye, a coaxing gesture, and a vaguely Italian accent, which gave him seemingly the look of a Mazarin without mustaches, and who was also well-versed in the Latin tongues, and was quoting on every occasion Tacitus, Horace, and the Commentaries.

Of an old, hereditary race, his brothers had, it seems, exiled him at the age of ten, on account of his liberal opinions, and since then he had

rambled about the world for his instruction and pleasure, as His Philosophical Highness. Singular coincidence! the prince had passed three years at Tarascon. Tartarin wondered at never having met him at the Club or on the Esplanade: "I went out but little," said his Highness, in an evasive tone, and the Tarasconian, through discretion, dared ask no more. All these great existences have such mysterious sides!

In short, a very good prince was this Signor Gregory. While sipping the rosy Crescia wine, he heard patiently Tartarin's story about his Moorish lady, and even was certain, knowing all these ladies, that he could find her promptly.

They drank deep and long. They clinked glasses "to the ladies of Algiers!" and "to free Montenegro!"

Outside, under the terrace, the sea was rolling, and the waves, in the darkness, were beating the shore, with the sound of wet clothes shaken together. The air was warm, and the heavens full of stars.

In the plane-trees a nightingale was singing.

It was Tartarin who paid the scot.

CHAPTER X.

TELL ME THE NAME OF THY FATHER AND I WILL TELL THEE THE NAME OF THIS FLOWER.

TELL me of Montenegrin princes for starting the quail nimbly.

On the morrow of that evening at the Plane-trees, at early dawn, Prince Gregory was in the Tarasconian's chamber.

"Quick, quick, dress yourself. Your Moorish lady is found. She is called Baïa — is twenty, pretty as a pink, and a widow already."

"Widow! What luck!," joyously exclaimed the brave Tartarin, who distrusted Oriental husbands.

"Yes, but much watched over by her brother."

"Oh! the deuse!"

"A fierce Moor, who sells pipes in the Bazar d'Orléans."

Here a silence.

"Good!," resumed the prince, "you are not the man to be frightened by so small a matter;

and then perhaps we can circumvent this pirate by buying some pipes of him. Hurry up! Dress yourself, you lucky dog!"

Pale, excited, and his heart full of love, the Tarasconian leaped out of bed, and jumped hastily into his vast flannel drawers.

"What must I do?"

"Simply write to the lady, and ask her for an interview!"

"Then she knows French?" said the naïve Tartarin, with a disappointed look; for he was dreaming of unmixed Orient.

"She knows not a word of it," replied the prince imperturbably; "but you are going to dictate a letter to me, and I will translate it, as you proceed."

"Oh preïnce, what kindness!"

And the Tarasconian began to pace to and fro in his chamber, silent, and collecting his thoughts.

Of course, one does not write to a Moorish lady in Algiers, as one would to a grisette at Beaucaire. Most fortunately, our hero had before him his numerous readings, which enabled him, by amalgamating the rhetoric of Gustave Aymard's Apache Indians with Lamartine's Travels in the East, and with a few distant reminiscences of the Song of

Songs, to compose the most Oriental letter to be seen. It began

"As the ostrich in the sands" —

And ended

"Tell me the name of thy father, and I will tell thee the name of this flower."

To this missive the romantic Tartarin would have liked very much to add a bouquet of emblematic flowers, in Oriental fashion; but Prince Gregory thought it was better to buy some pipes of the brother, which would not fail to mollify that gentleman's savage humor, and would certainly give very great pleasure to the lady, who smoked a great deal.

"Let's go right off, and buy some pipes!" said Tartarin, full of ardor.

"No! No! Let me go alone. I shall get them at a better bargain."

"What! you will? O Prëince! Prëince!" And the brave man, all confusion, handed his purse to the obliging Montenegrin, begging him to neglect nothing that might satisfy the lady.

Unfortunately, the affair — though well launched — did not progress as rapidly as one might have hoped. Much touched, it seems, by Tartarin's eloquence, and, moreover, three-fourths captivated

beforehand, the Moorish lady would have asked for nothing better than to receive him; but the brother had scruples, to lull which, it was necessary to buy dozens, grosses, cargoes of pipes.

"What in the world can Baïa do with all these pipes?" wondered poor Tartarin at times; — but he paid all the same, and without higgling.

At last, after buying mountains of pipes, and spreading floods of Oriental poetry, he obtained an interview.

I need not tell you with what a throbbing heart the Tarasconian got himself ready, and with what care he trimmed, oiled, and perfumed his rough, cap-hunter's beard, without forgetting — for one must anticipate every thing — to slip into his pocket an iron-pointed billy and two or three revolvers.

The prince, always obliging, came to this first interview, in the capacity of interpreter. The lady dwelt in the upper part of the town. Before her door, a Moorish youth of thirteen or fourteen summers, was smoking cigarettes. It was the famous Ali, the brother in question. Seeing the two visitors arrive, he knocked twice at the gate, and discreetly retired.

The gate opened. A negress appeared, who,

without saying a single word, conducted these gentlemen across the narrow inner court, into a cool little chamber, where the lady awaited them, reclining on a low couch. At first sight, she seemed to the Tarasconian smaller and stouter than the Moorish lady of the omnibus. Indeed, was it the same one? But this suspicion merely crossed Tartarin's brain like a flash.

The lady, as she was, was so pretty, with her bare feet, and her plump little fingers loaded with rings, so rosy and delicate; and beneath her bodice of cloth of gold, and dress embroidered with flowers, she showed a pleasing person, rather plump, perfectly dainty, and well-rounded. The amber stem of a narghilé was smoking between her lips, and wrapped her in a halo of light smoke.

On entering, the Tarasconian placed one hand on his heart, and bowed as Moorishly as possible, rolling about big, passionate eyes. Baïa looked at him a moment without saying any thing; then, letting go her amber pipe, fell back, and hid her face in her hands; and one saw only her white neck, which danced to wild laughter, like a satin bag full of pearls.

CHAPTER XI.

SIDI TART'RI BEN TART'RI.

If you should enter, some evening, the Algerian cafés in the upper town, you would hear, even to-day, the Moors talking, with winks and chucklings, of a certain Sidi Tart'ri ben Tart'ri, a rich and amiable European who — now some years ago — lived in the upper quarters, with the little lady called Baïa.

The Sidi Tart'ri in question, who has left such merry souvenirs about the Casbah, is no other, you have guessed, than our Tartarin.

What do you expect? There are thus, in the lives of saints and heroes, hours of blindness, trouble, and weakness. The illustrious Tarasconian was no more exempt than any other; and this is why — during two months — oblivious of lions and glory, he was intoxicated with Oriental love, and slept, like Hannibal at Capua, in the delights of White Algiers.

The brave man had hired, in the heart of the

Arab town, a pretty little native cottage, with an inner court, banana-trees, cool galleries, and fountains. He lived there, far from all noise, in the society of his Moorish lady, Moor himself from head to foot, puffing all day at his narghilé, and eating sweetmeats flavored with musk.

Reclining on a divan opposite him, Baïa, guitar in hand, would sing through her nose monotonous airs; or else, to amuse her lord, she imitated stage-dances, holding in her hand a little glass, in which she admired the reflection of her white teeth, and put on airs.

As the lady knew not a word of French, nor Tartarin a word of Arabic, the conversation languished now and then; and the talkative Tarasconian had ample time to do penance for the intemperance of language, of which he had been guilty at Bézuquet's pharmacy, or at the gunsmith Costecalde's.

But this very penance did not lack charm; and it was a sort of delightful spleen he felt in staying there all day, without talking, but listening to the *gloo-gloo* of the narghilé, the twang-twang of the guitar, and the light plash-plash of the fountain.

The narghilé, the bath, and love, filled all his life. They went out but little. Sometimes Sidi

Tart'ri, his lady behind him, would go off on a good mule, to eat pomegranates in a little garden he had purchased in the suburbs. But never, never at all, did he go down into the European town. With its revelling zouaves, its alcazars swarming with officers, and its everlasting rattling of sabres dragging along under the arcades, that Algiers seemed to him insupportable, and ugly as a European guard-house.

In fine, the Tarasconian was very happy. Tartarin-Sancho especially, who had a sweet tooth for Turkish pastry, declared himself utterly satisfied with his new existence. Tartarin-Quixote felt, now and then, some remorse, when he thought of Tarascon and the promised skins. But it did not last; and, to chase away these sad thoughts, a look from Baïa sufficed, or a spoonful of her diabolical sweetmeats, odorous and distressing as Circe's potions.

In the evening, Prince Gregory would come round to talk of free Montenegro. Indefatigably obliging, this amiable lord filled in the house the function of interpreter, or, if need were, even that of steward, and all this for nothing, for the mere pleasure. Except him, Tartarin received only *Turs*. All those pirates with fierce faces, who

caused him but lately so much fear, from the depths of their black stalls, were found to be, when once he knew them, good, inoffensive tradesmen, — embroiderers, grocers, or pipe-stem-turners, all well bred, humble, sharp, cunning, and the best of players at '*la bouillotte.*' Four or five times a week, these gentlemen would come to pass the evening with Sidi Tart'ri, win his money, eat his sweetmeats, and, when ten o'clock struck, retire discreetly, thanking the Prophet.

Following them, Sidi Tart'ri and his faithful spouse would finish the evening on the terrace, a large white terrace, which formed the roof of the house, and commanded the town. All about, a thousand other terraces, also white and tranquil in the moonlight, sloped successively down to the sea. The music of guitars reached them, borne on the breeze.

Suddenly, like a bouquet of stars, a great, clear melody would waft itself gently through the heavens; and, on the minaret of a neighboring mosque, a handsome muezzin would appear, his white form outlined against the deep blue of the night, and would chant the glory of Allah in a marvellous voice, which filled the horizon.

Immediately Baïa would let go her guitar; and

her large eyes, turned toward the muezzin, would seem to drink in the prayer with delight. As long as the chant lasted, she would remain there, trembling in an ecstasy, like an Oriental Saint Theresa. Tartarin, deeply stirred, would watch her praying, and think to himself that it was a powerful and beautiful religion, which could cause such an intoxication of faith.

Tarascon, veil thy face! Thy Tartarin thought of turning renegade.

CHAPTER XII.

THEY WRITE TO US FROM TARASCON.

ONE fine afternoon, when the sky was blue, and the breeze was mild, Sidi Tart'ri, astride of his mule, was returning all alone from his little enclosure. With his legs, spread apart by the large cushions of Spanish broom, rocking to the sound of his large stirrups, and his whole body swinging with the beast's see-saw, the brave man was going along in a lovely country, with his two hands clasped upon his stomach, and three-fourths put to sleep by his comfort and the heat.

All at once, as he entered the town, a formidable call awoke him.

"Why! What a surprise! That must be Mr. Tartarin."

On hearing the name of Tartarin, and this jovial Southern accent, the Tarasconian raised his head, and perceived, two steps off, the worthy, swarthy visage of Master Barbassou, captain of the *Zouave*, taking his absinthe, and smoking his pipe, at the door of a little café.

"Oh, Good-day, Barbassou!" said Tartarin, stopping his mule.

Instead of answering, Barbassou stared at him a moment with open eyes, and then he went off into shouts, laughing so that Sidi Tart'ri remained dumfounded, sitting back on his watermelons.

"What a turban, my poor Mr. Tartarin!—It's true, then, as they say, that you've turned Tur? And little Baïa, is she always singing Marco la Belle?"

"Marco la Belle!" said Tartarin indignantly, —"Learn, captain, that the person of whom you are speaking is a virtuous Moorish young lady, and that she does not know a word of French."

"Baïa, not a word of French? Where did you come from last?"

And the worthy captain began to laugh harder yet.

Then, seeing poor Sidi Tart'ri putting on a long face, he changed his mind.

"In fact, perhaps it isn't the same one. Let's agree I have mixed them up. Only, hark'ee, Mr. Tartarin, you will do well, all the same, to mistrust Moorish ladies in Algiers, and princes of Montenegro too!"

Tartarin rose in his stirrups, putting on that look of his.

"The prince is my friend, captain."

"Well! Well! Don't let us get mad. Won't you take an absinthe? No! Nothing to tell 'em at home? No again! Well then, good luck to you. By the way, mate, I have some good French tobacco here, if you want to take off some pipesful. Take it now! Take it! It will do you good. It's your confounded Oriental tobacco that muddles your ideas."

Thereupon, the captain returned to his absinthe, and Tartarin, quite pensive, resumed at a jog-trot the way to his cottage.

Even though his great soul refused to believe any thing, Barbassou's hints had saddened him; then, those home-brewed oaths, and the old, familiar accent, all this awoke in him a vague remorse.

At home, he found no one. Baïa was at the bath. The negress seemed ugly to him, and the house gloomy. A prey to an indefinable melancholy, he went to sit beside the fountain, and filled a pipe with Barbassou's tobacco. This tobacco was wrapped up in a piece of the *Semaphore.* In unfolding it, the name of his native town struck his eye.

"They write us from Tarascon:

"The town is in agony. Tartarin, the lion-killer, who

departed to hunt the great felines in Africa, has sent us no news of himself for several months. What has become of our heroic compatriot? One hardly dares ask himself, when he has known, as we have, that ardent soul, its valor, and its need of adventures. Has he been, like so many others, ingulfed in the sand; or has he fallen between the murderous teeth of one of those monsters of Atlas, whose skins he had promised to the municipality? Terrible uncertainty! However, some negro merchants, who came to the Beaucaire fair, pretend to have encountered, in the middle of the desert, a European, whose description answered to his, and who was moving toward Tombooktoo. God preserve to us our Tartarin!"

When he read this, the Tarasconian blushed, turned pale, and trembled. All Tarascon appeared before him:—the club, the cap-hunters, the green armchair at Costecalde's, and, soaring above, like a spread eagle, the tremendous mustache of the brave commandant, Bravida.

Then, to see himself there, as he was, cowardly squatting on a mat, whilst he was believed to be in the way of slaughtering wild beasts, Tartarin of Tarascon was ashamed of himself, and wept.

All at once the hero leaped up.

"To the lion! To the lion!"

And, rushing into the dusty nook where slept the shelter-tent, the pharmacy, the potted provis-

ions, and the chests of arms, he dragged them into the middle of the court.

Tartarin-Sancho had at once expired: there remained now only Tartarin-Quixote. After taking just time enough to inspect his gear, to arm himself, to harness himself, to pull on again his top-boots, and to write a line to the prince to intrust Bara to his care, and time to slip some bank-notes, wet with tears, into the envelope, the intrepid Tarasconian was rolling in a stage-coach on the road to Blidah, leaving at the house the negress, stupefied, before the narghilé, turban, slippers, and all Sidi Tart'ri's cast-off Mussulman toggery, which lay around pitifully, on the short white clover of the yard.

EPISODE III. AMONG THE LIONS.

CHAPTER I.

THE TRANSPORTED STAGE-COACHES.

It was a stage-coach of the good old times, upholstered in the old fashion, with coarse blue cloth all faded, and with those enormous coarse woollen top-knots of buttons, which, after several hours' travel, give you corrugations in the back. Tartarin of Tarascon had a corner in the body of the coach: he installed himself there as best he could, and, while waiting to inhale the musky emanations of "the great African felines," he had to be content with that good old stage-coachy smell, queerly compounded of a thousand odors, from men, horses, women, leather, victuals, and mouldy straw.

There was a little of every thing inside:—a

Trappist, Jewish merchants, two grisettes rejoining their corps — the 3d Hussars, — and an Orleansville photographer. But, charming and varied as the company might be, the Tarasconian was not disposed to converse, and sat there, quite pensive, with his arm passed through the strap, and his carabines between his knees. His precipitate departure, Baïa's black eyes, and the terrible hunting he was about to undertake, all troubled his brain, to say nothing of the fact that, with its good patriarchal look, this European stage-coach, found in the middle of Africa, recalled to him vaguely the Tarascon of his youth, the races in the suburbs, little dinners on the banks of the Rhone, and a throng of memories.

Gradually night fell. The conductor lit his lanterns. The rusty coach started off, creaking on its old springs; the horses trotted, and the bells jingled. From time to time, up above, under the top-cover, there was a terrible rattling of old junk: it was the war-material.

Tartarin of Tarascon, more than half asleep, stopped a moment to look at the passengers, comically shaken up by the jolts, and dancing before him like silly shadows; then his eyes grew dim, and he only heard very vaguely the groaning axle and complaining sides of the coach.

Suddenly, a voice, an old fairy's voice, hoarse, cracked, and broken, called the Tarasconian by name: "Mr. Tartarin! Mr. Tartarin!"

"Who is calling me?"

"It is I, Mr. Tartarin: you don't recognize me? I am the old coach which — twenty years ago — ran between Tarascon and Nîmes. How many times I have carried you, you and your friends, when you went cap-hunting near Joncquières or Bellegarde! I did not place you at first, on account of your *Tur's* cap, and the flesh you've put on you; but, as soon as you began to snore, Lord bless you! I knew you at once."

"Good! Good!" said the Tarasconian, a little vexed.

Then relenting, he added:

"But, my poor old lady, what have you come to be doing here?"

"Ah! my good Mr. Tartarin, I did not come here of my own free will, I assure you. When the Beaucaire railroad was finished, they no longer found me good for any thing, and they sent me to Africa. And I am not the only one! Almost all the stage-coaches in France have been transported, like me. They found us too re-actionary; and now see us all here, leading the life of galley-

slaves. It is what in France you call Algerian railways."

Here the old stage-coach heaved a deep sigh; then she resumed.

"Ah! Mr. Tartarin, how I regret my lovely Tarascon! Those were good times for me, the days of my youth! You should have seen me start in the morning, washed with a flood of water, and all shining with my newly-varnished wheels, my lanterns like two suns, and my top-cover always rubbed with oil! How fine it was, when the postillion used to crack his whip to the tune of '*Lagadigadeou, la Tarasque, la Tarasque!*' and when the conductor, with his horn slung over his shoulder, and his embroidered cap on one ear, slinging his little dog, always furious, on to the top-cover, used to jump up himself, crying Light up! Light up! Then my four horses would start off to the sound of bells, barking, and horns, the windows would fly up, and all Tarascon would look with pride on the stage-coach tearing along the king's highway.

"What a glorious road, too, Mr. Tartarin, wide, and well kept up, with its kilometre-posts, its little piles of stones at regular intervals, and, on the right and left, beautiful plains of olive-trees and

vines; then inns every ten steps, and relays every five minutes! And my passengers, what worthy folks they were! Mayors and curates, going to Nîmes to see their prefect or bishop, good taffeta-makers returning honestly from *le Mazet*, students in vacation, peasants in blouses, clean-shaven that very morning, and on top, on the outside, all you gentlemen, the cap-hunters, who were always in such good humor, and who sang so well, each one *yours*, in the evening, as you returned by star-light!

"Now it is another story. God only knows what people I carry! A heap of miscreants come, I know not whence, who fill me with vermin, negroes, Bedouins, old soldiers, adventurers from all countries, and colonists in rags, who infest me with their old pipes, and all talking a language 'twould puzzle the Old Harry to understand. And you see how they treat me! — never brushed, and never washed. They grudge me my axle-grease; and instead of my good, sleek, easy-going horses of the old times, they give me little Arab horses with the devil in 'em, that fight, bite, dance, and skip mud, like goats, and kick my shafts to smash. Aïe! — Aïe! — Look out! There it begins. And the roads! Hereabouts, it is still bearable, be-

cause we are near the Government; but yonder there is nothing left, no road at all. We go along as we can, over hill and dale, among the dwarf-palms and the lentisks — without a single fixed relay. We stop according to the conductor's whim, now at one farm, now at another.

"Sometimes that scoundrel makes me make a circuit of two leagues, to go and drink an absinthe or a *champoreau* with a friend. After that, whip up, postillion! We must make up for lost time. The sun is roasting, and the dust burning! Whip away! We hit against something, — we upset! Whip harder yet! We cross streams swimming, we get wet, we catch cold, we are drowned even. Whip! Whip! Whip! Then, in the evening, all dripping — a fine thing at my age, with my rheumatism! — I must sleep in the open air, in the court of a caravansary, open to all the winds. At night, jackals and hyenas come to snuff round my boxes, and marauders that fear the dew seek the warmth of my compartments. This is the life I lead, my poor Mr. Tartarin; and I shall lead it till the day, when, burned by the sun, and decayed by the damp nights, I shall fall — no longer fit for any thing else — at some turn in a bad road, where

the Arabs will boil their *couscouss* with the débris of my old carcass."

"Blidah! Blidah!" cried the conductor, opening the door.

CHAPTER II.

WHERE WE SEE A LITTLE GENTLEMAN PASS.

THROUGH the windows, obscured by dampness, Tartarin of Tarascon made out dimly the square belonging to a pretty sub-prefecture, regularly laid out, surrounded with arcades, and planted with orange-trees; in the middle of it, little leaden soldiers were performing their exercises in the clear, rosy morning-mist. The cafés were taking down their shutters. In one corner was a vegetable-market. This was charming; but it did not yet smack of lions.

"Down South! Further South!" muttered the good Tartarin, tucking himself into his corner again.

Just then the door opened. A puff of fresh air entered, bringing on its wings, in the perfume of flowering orange-trees, a little gentleman in a nut-brown coat, old, dried up, wrinkled, and stiff, with a face as big as one's fist, a black silk cravat two or three inches high, a leathern apron, and an umbrella, — the perfect village-notary.

On perceiving the Tarasconian's war-material, the little gentleman, who had sat down opposite, seemed excessively surprised, and began to look at Tartarin with an annoying persistency.

They unhitched, hitched up, and the coach went off. The little gentleman kept looking at Tartarin. At last, the Tarasconian took offence.

"Does that astonish you?" said he, in his turn looking the little gentleman full in the face.

"No! it annoys me," answered the other very tranquilly; and the fact is, that with his shelter-tent, his revolver, his two guns in their case, and his hunting-knife — not to speak of his natural corpulence, — Tartarin of Tarascon took up a good deal of room.

The answer of the little gentleman vexed him:

"May be, you suppose I am going after lions with your umbrella!" said the great man proudly.

The little gentleman looked at his umbrella, smiled gently, and then said, still with the same phlegm:

"Then, sir, you are —?"

"Tartarin of Tarascon, the lion-killer!"

As he pronounced these words, the intrepid Tarasconian shook, as if it were a mane. the blue tassel of his *sheshia.*

There was a feeling of amazement in the coach.

The Trappist crossed himself, the grisettes uttered little shrieks of fright, and the Orleansville photographer drew near the lion-killer, dreaming already of the distinguished honor of taking his photograph.

As for the little gentleman, he was not disconcerted: —

"Have you already killed many lions, Mr. Tartarin?" he asked very calmly.

The Tarasconian received him in fine style:

"Have I killed many, sir? I only wish you had as many hairs on your head."

And the whole coach-load laughed to see the three yellow Cadet-Roussel hairs, which bristled up on the little gentleman's cranium.

In his turn, the Orleansville photographer took up the conversation.

"A terrible profession yours, Mr. Tartarin. One gets into a tight box now and then. For instance, that poor Mr. Bombonnel" —

"Oh yes! the panther-killer," said Tartarin, disdainfully enough.

"Do you know him?" asked the little gentleman.

"Well! Upon my soul! Do I know him?

We have hunted together more than twenty times."

The little gentleman smiled. "So you hunt panthers too, eh! Mr. Tartarin?"

"Occasionally — as a pastime," said the enraged Tarasconian.

He added, tossing his head with an heroic air, which inflamed the hearts of the two grisettes:

"It is nothing to the lion!"

"The amount of it is," said the Orleansville photographer, "a panther is merely a large cat."

"Exactly so!" said Tartarin, not sorry to take down Mr. Bombonnel's glory, above all, before ladies.

Here the coach stopped, the conductor came to open the door, and, addressing the little old gentleman, said, with a very respectful look:

"Here you are, sir."

The little gentleman rose, got out, and then, before shutting the door, said:

"Will you permit me to give you a bit of advice, Mr. Tartarin?"

"What advice, sir?"

"Bless me! Listen, you look like a worthy fellow, and I would rather tell you how it is. Return to Tarascon quickly, Mr. Tartarin: you

are losing your time here. A few panthers are still left in the province; but bah! that is too small game for you. As for lions, it is all over. There are none left in Algeria — my friend Chassaing has just killed the last one."

Whereupon the little gentleman bowed, shut the door, and went off laughing, with his apron and his umbrella.

"Conductor!" said Tartarin, putting on that face of his, "Who is that old chap?"

"What! You don't know him? Why! it is Mr. Bombonnel."

CHAPTER III.

A CONVENT OF LIONS.

At Milianah, Tartarin of Tarascon got out, leaving the stage to continue on its way South.

Two days of hard jolting, two nights spent with open eyes looking through the windows, lest he should not perceive, in the fields by the wayside, the lion's formidable image, so many emotions, and so much sleeplessness, well deserved some hours' rest. And then, if we must tell every thing, since his misadventure with Bombonnel, the loyal Tarasconian felt ill at ease, in spite of his arms, his terrible face, and his red cap, before the Orleansville photographer and the two young women of the 3d Hussars.

So he directed his steps through the wide streets of Milianah, full of fine trees and fountains; but, while seeking a hotel to suit him, the poor man could not help thinking of Bombonnel's words.— If it were, after all, true? If there were no more lions in Algeria?—What good would there be, then, in so much travel and so much fatigue?

Suddenly, at the bend of a street, our hero found himself face to face — with what? — guess! — a magnificent lion, waiting before the door of a café, seated right royally on his tail, with his tawny mane in the sunshine.

"What did they mean by telling me there were no more?" cried the Tarasconian, jumping back. Hearing this exclamation, the lion lowered his head; and, taking in his jaws a wooden bowl, set before him on the sidewalk, he held it up beside Tartarin, who was motionless with amazement. A passing Arab threw in a two-sou bit, and the lion wagged his tail. Then Tartarin understood the whole thing. He saw, what emotion had at first prevented him from seeing, the crowd gathered round the poor, blind, tame lion, and two tall negroes, armed with big sticks, who walked him through the town, as a Savoyard does his dormouse.

Tartarin's blood boiled over: "Wretches!" he cried, in a voice of thunder, "thus to humiliate these noble beasts!" And, rushing upon the lion, he snatched the vile bowl from between his royal jaws. The two negroes, thinking they had to deal with a thief, rushed upon the Tarasconian, with sticks raised. It was a terrible hurly-burly. The

negroes belabored, the women shrieked, and the children laughed. An old Jewish cobbler cried, from the depths of his shop, "To the Shustice of Peash! To the Shustice of Peash!" The lion himself, in his darkness, tried a roar; and unlucky Tartarin, after a desperate struggle, rolled on the ground, in the midst of coppers and blows.

At this moment, a man broke through the crowd, put aside the negroes with a word, the women and children with a gesture, raised up Tartarin, brushed him, shook him, and sat him down, all out of breath, on a stone post.

"What! Prëince, is it you?" said the good Tartarin, rubbing his ribs.

"Yes, my valiant friend, it is I! As soon as I received your note, I confided Baïa to her brother, hired a post-chaise, came fifty leagues at a triple gallop, and here I am, just in time to snatch you from the brutality of these boors. What have you done, good Heavens! to get yourself into such a bad scrape?"

"What would you have me do, prince? To see this unhappy lion, with his bowl in his teeth, humiliated, conquered, jeered at, and the laughing-stock of all this Mussulman rabble —"

"But you are in error, my noble friend. This

lion, on the contrary, is to them an object of respect and adoration. It is a sacred beast, forming part of a great convent of lions, founded three hundred years ago by Mohammed-Ben-Aouda, a kind of fierce and formidable trap, full of roaring and the odors of wild beasts, where strange monks bring up and tame lions by hundreds, and send them all over Northern Africa, accompanied by begging friars. The gifts which the friars receive serve to support the convent and its mosque; and, if the negroes showed so much temper just now, it is because they have the conviction that for a sou, a single sou of the collection, lost or stolen through their fault, the lion would immediately devour them."

While listening to this improbable and yet veracious account, Tartarin of Tarascon was delighted, and snuffed the air noisily.

— "What suits me in all this," said he, by way of conclusion, "is that, with due respect to old Bombonnel, there are still lions in Algeria."

"Are there any?" said the prince enthusiastically. To-morrow we will begin to beat the plain of the Shéliff, and you will see!"

"What, prince? Do you mean to hunt, too?"

"Bless you! Do you think, indeed, I would

let you go off alone in the middle of Africa, among these ferocious tribes, of whose language and customs you are ignorant. No! No! illustrious Tartarin, I will no longer leave you. Wherever you are, I wish to be."

"Oh! prëince, prëince!"

And Tartarin, radiant, pressed the valiant Gregory to his heart, thinking with pride that, after the example of Jules Gérard, Bombonnel, and all other famous lion-killers, he was going to have a foreign prince to accompany him on his hunts.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CARAVAN ON THE MARCH.

THE following day, at the earliest hour, the intrepid Tartarin and the no less intrepid Prince Gregory, followed by half a dozen negro porters, went out of Milianah, and down toward the plain of the Shéliff, by a delicious hillside, shaded with jessamines, tuyas, carob-trees, and wild olives, between two rows of little native gardens and thousands of bright bubbling springs, which leaped, singing, from rock to rock — It was a Lebanon landscape.

Quite as much loaded with arms as the great Tartarin, Prince Gregory was also accoutred with a singular and magnificent gold-lace *képi* [or military cap], with a trimming of oak-leaves, embroidered with silver threads, which gave his Highness seemingly the appearance of some Mexican general, or of a depot-master on the banks of the Danube.

This extraordinary *képi* greatly puzzled the

Tarasconian; and he asked timidly for an explanation.

"Indispensable head-dress for African travel," answered the prince gravely; and, polishing up the visor with his sleeve, he instructed his naïve companion as to the important part which the *képi* plays in our relations with the Arabs, and the terror which these military insignia alone have the privilege of inspiring in them, so much so that the Civil Administration has been obliged to cover all its servants with *képis* from the road-mender up to the registrar. In short, to govern Algeria (it is the prince who is still speaking), there is no need of a strong head, nor indeed of any head at all: a *képi* is sufficient, a fine lace *képi*, shining on the end of a stick, like Gessler's cap.

Thus conversing and philosophizing, the caravan went its way. The porters — bare-foot — leaped from rock to rock with monkeys' cries. The chests of arms rattled. The guns flashed. The natives made obeisances to the ground before the magic *képi*. Above, on the ramparts of Milianah, the Arab military governor, walking in the cool air with his lady, hearing these unaccustomed sounds, and seeing arms shining through the branches, thought it was a sudden attack, had the

drawbridge lowered, the alarm sounded, and incontinently put the town in a state of siege.

A fine beginning for the caravan!

Unfortunately, before the end of the day, things went wrong. Of the negroes who were carrying the baggage, one was seized with an atrocious colic, from having eaten the plasters in the pharmacy. Another fell by the road-side, dead-drunk with camphorated brandy. The third, the one who carried the travelling-album, seduced by the gilt clasps, and persuaded that he was carrying off the treasures of Mecca, fled into the Zaccar with all his might.

They must consider. The caravan halted, and held counsel in the checkered shade of an old fig-tree.

"I am of opinion," said the prince, trying, but without success, to melt a cake of pemmican in a perfected triple-bottomed kettle, "I am of opinion that this evening we should give up the negro porters. There is an Arab market just here, close at hand. Our best plan is to stop there, and purchase some *bourriquots.*"

"No! No! No *bourriquots!*" interrupted the great Tartarin hastily, who, at the recollection of Noiraud, turned quite red.

And he added, the hypocrite:

"How can you expect such little brutes to be able to carry all our materials?"

The prince smiled.

"That is where you are deceived, my illustrious friend. Lean and insignificant as he may seem to you, the Algerian *bourriquot* has solid loins. Indeed, he needs them to support all he supports. Ask the Arabs. This is the way they explain our colonial organization. At the top, say they, is *mouci* the Governor, with a big stick, who beats his staff; the staff, by way of revenge, beat the soldier; the soldier, the colonist; the colonist, the Arab; the Arab, the negro; the negro, the Jew; and the Jew, in his turn, the *bourriquot;* and the poor little *bourriquot*, having nobody to beat, hunches his back, and bears it all. You see, he can carry your chests."

"No matter!" resumed Tartarin of Tarascon, "I think that, for the looks of our caravan, asses would not do very well. I should like something more Oriental. Now, if we could have a camel, for instance—"

"As many as you like," said his Highness; and they started off for the Arab market.

This market was held at the distance of some

miles on the banks of the Shéliff. There were five or six thousand Arabs in rags, swarming in the sun, and noisily trafficking, in the midst of jars of black olives, pots of honey, bags of spice, and cigars in great heaps; there were great fires where were being roasted whole sheep, dripping with butter; and there was slaughtering in open air, where negroes, stark naked, their feet in blood, and their arms red, were skinning, with small knives, kids hanging on a tall stake.

In one corner, under a tent patched up with a thousand colors, is a Moorish scribe, with a big book and spectacles. Here is a group, and cries of rage: it is a game of roulette, set up on a grain-measure, and Kabyles stabbing each other round it.

Yonder is heard stamping of feet, shouts, and laughter: it is a Jewish merchant and his mule that they are watching drown in the Shéliff. Then, what scorpions, dogs, crows, and flies! Swarms of flies!

Camels, though, were lacking. They found one at last, however, which some M'zabites were seeking to get rid of. It was the genuine camel of the desert, the classic camel, bald, and melancholy, with a long Bedouin head, and a hump

which, grown flabby in consequence of too long fasts, hung sadly down on one side.

Tartarin thought him so fine, that he wanted to have the whole caravan get up on him. This everlasting Oriental folly!

The beast kneeled, and they strapped on the trunks.

The prince installed himself on the animal's neck. Tartarin, for the sake of more majesty, had himself hoisted on to the hump, between two chests; and there, proud and well wedged in, saluting with a noble gesture the whole market, which had run up, he gave the signal to start. Ye Gods! If the people of Tarascon could have but seen him.

The camel rose, stretched out his long, knotty legs, and took his flight.

Oh, woful to relate! After a few strides, Tartarin feels himself turning pale; and the heroic *sheshia* resumes, one by one, its old positions of the time of the *Zouave.* This plaguy camel pitched like a frigate.

"Prëince! Prëince!" muttered Tartarin, pale as death, and clinging to the dry tow of the hump, "Prëince, let us get down. I feel — I feel — that I am going to make France ridiculous."

Go to! The camel was launched, and nothing could stop him now. Four thousand Arabs ran after, barefoot, gesticulating, laughing like crazy people, and making six hundred thousand white teeth shine in the sun.

The great man of Tarascon had to resign himself. He sank sadly upon the hump. The *sheshia* took all the positions it liked — and France was made ridiculous.

CHAPTER V.

THE EVENING-WATCH IN A CLUMP OF ROSE-LAURELS.

PICTURESQUE as their new mounting might be, our lion-killers had to give it up, for the *sheshia's* sake. So they continued on their way afoot, as before; and the caravan tranquilly went along Southward by short stages, the Tarasconian ahead, the Montenegrin in the rear, and, in the ranks, the camel with the chests of arms.

The expedition lasted nearly a month.

For a month, seeking undiscoverable lions, the terrible Tartarin wandered from douar to douar in the immense plain of the Shéliff, across that queer and formidable French Algeria, where the perfumes of the old East are complicated with a strong odor of absinthe and of barracks, a mixture of Abraham and Zouzou, something fairy-like and naïvely burlesque, like a page of the Old Testament narrated by Sergeant La Ramée or Brigadier Pitou. A curious spectacle, for eyes knowing

how to see it, is this savage and decayed people, which we are civilizing by giving it our vices. — The fierce and uncontrolled authority of fantastic pachagas, who gravely use their grand strings of the Legion of Honor for handkerchiefs, and for a yes or no beat people on the soles of their feet, and the justice without conscience of cadis with big spectacles, Tartuffes of the Koran and the law, who dream of the fifteenth of August, and of promotion under the palms, and who sell their decrees, as Esau his birthright, for a dish of lentils or of sugared *couscouss*, and caïds, libertines and drunkards, former valets of some General Yusuf, who get intoxicated on champagne with Mahonian washerwomen, and feast on roast mutton, while, before their tents, the whole tribe are famished, and quarrel with the hounds, for the scraps from the lord's feast.

Then all around are unploughed fields, scorched grass, bare bushes, scrubby growths of cactuses and lentisks, — the granary of France! — a granary empty of grain, alas! and rich only in jackals and bugs. Then there are abandoned douars, frightened tribes going off without knowing whither, fleeing from hunger, and strewing dead bodies all along their route. Here and there is a French

village, with houses in ruins, untilled fields, mad locusts eating the very window-curtains, and with all the colonists in the cafés, drinking absinthe, while they discuss projects of reform and of a constitution.

This is what Tartarin might have seen, had he taken the trouble; but, wholly given over to his leonine passion, the man of Tarascon went straight ahead, looking neither to right nor to left, his eye obstinately fixed on those imaginary monsters, that never appeared.

As the shelter-tent persisted in not opening, and the cakes of pemmican in not melting, the caravan was obliged to stop, morning and night, among the tribes. Everywhere, thanks to Prince Gregory's *képi*, our hunters were received with open arms. They lodged with the agas, in queer palaces, great white, windowless farm-houses, where one finds pell-mell *narghilés* and mahogany furniture, Smyrnese carpets and moderator-lamps, cedar boxes full of Turkish sequins, and clocks *à sujets*, Louis-Philippe style. Everywhere they gave Tartarin splendid fêtes, *diffas*, and *fastasias*. In his honor, whole *goums* made powder speak and their burnous shine in the sun. Then, when the powder had spoken, the good aga would come,

and present the bill. This is what is called Arab hospitality.

And still there were no lions, no more lions than on the Pont-Neuf.

However, the Tarasconian was not discouraged. Bravely pushing on down South, he would pass his days in beating the scrubby growths, feeling in the dwarf-palms with the end of his carabine, and "shoo-shoo-ing" at every bush. Then, every evening before going to bed, he kept a little watch of two or three hours. Pains lost! The lion did not show himself.

One evening though, about six o'clock, as the caravan was traversing a violet-colored grove of lentisks, where large quail, overcome with the heat, were hopping about here and there, Tartarin of Tarascon thought he heard — but so distant, so vague, so crumbled by the breeze — that wonderful roaring which he had heard so many times back there at Tarascon, behind the Mitaine menagerie.

At first, the hero thought he was dreaming. But in a moment, still distant, but more distinct, the roaring began again, and this time, while in all quarters of the horizon dogs in the douars were heard howling. Shaking with terror, and making

the canned provisions and chests of arms rattle, the camel's hump was severely agitated.

No more doubt. It was the lion. Quick! Quick! On the watch! Not a minute to lose.

There was, hard by, an old saint's tomb with a white cupola, with the defunct's large yellow slippers deposited in a niche above the door, and a medley of queer votive offerings, burnous-flaps, gold threads, and red hairs, hanging along the walls. Tartarin of Tarascon stowed his prince and camel therein, and started in quest of an ambush. Prince Gregory wished to follow him, but the Tarasconian refused: he was bound to confront the lion alone. Nevertheless, he recommended to his Highness not to go far off; and, by way of precaution, he confided to him his portfolio, a big portfolio, full of precious papers and bank-notes, which he feared might be torn to pieces by the lion's claws. This done, the hero sought his post.

A hundred paces in front of the saint's tomb, a little clump of rose-laurels was quivering in the evening-mist, on the bank of an almost dry stream. There it was that Tartarin went to ensconce himself, kneeling on the ground, according to the formula, his carabine in hand, and his big hunt-

ing-knife planted proudly before him in the sandy bank.

Night fell. Nature's rose-color changed to violet, then to a sombre blue. Beneath, in the pebbly bed of the river, shone like a mirror a small sheet of clear water. It was the wild beasts' drinking-place. On the slope of the opposite bank, was dimly seen the white path that their huge paws had marked out in the lentisks. That mysterious slope made one tremble. Add to that the vague creeping noises of African nights, stirring branches, velvety steps of prowling animals, the jackals' shrill barking, and oveheard, one or two hundred yards in the air, great flocks of cranes passing, with cries like children being strangled; and you will acknowledge there was reason enough for being agitated.

And Tartarin *was*, and very much so. His teeth chattered, poor man! And against the guard of his firmly planted hunting-knife, the barrel of his rifled gun rattled like a pair of castanets. What can you expect? There are evenings when one is not in trim; and then, where would the merit be, if heroes never were afraid? — Oh yes! Tartarin was afraid, and every minute, too. Nevertheless, he held out one hour, two hours; but heroism has

its limits. Near him, in the dried-up bed of the stream, the Tarasconian hears all at once a sound of steps, and of pebbles rolling. This time, terror raises him from the ground. He fires two shots at random in the dark, and scampers off to the tomb, leaving his knife standing in the sand, a cross commemorative of the most tremendous panic that ever assailed the soul of a conqueror of hydras.

"Here, prince! The lion!"

A silence.

"Prëince, Prëince! Are you there?"

The prince was not there. On the white wall of the saint's tomb, the good camel alone cast the weird shadow of his hump in the moonlight. Prince Gregory had just made off with portfolio and bank-notes. For a month his Highness had waited for this opportunity.

CHAPTER VI.

AT LAST!

On the morrow of this eventful and tragic evening, when our hero awoke at early dawn, and had made certain that the prince and cash were really gone, gone never to return; when he saw that he was alone in that little white tomb, betrayed, robbed, and abandoned in the middle of wild Algeria, with a one-humped camel and a little pocket-money his every resource; then, for the first time, the Tarasconian doubted. He doubted Montenegro; he doubted friendship and glory; he doubted even lions; and, like a saint in agony, the great man took to weeping bitterly.

Well, while he was seated there pensively on the door-step of the saint's tomb, his head between his two hands, his carabine between his legs, and with the camel looking at him, suddenly the bushes opposite separate, and Tartarin, astounded, beholds appear, ten steps in front of him, a gigantic lion, advancing head erect, and uttering formidable

roars, which make the walls of the tomb, all loaded with gewgaws, and even the saint's slippers in their niche, shake.

Tartarin alone was unshaken.

— "At last!" he cried, leaping up, and aiming his gun. Bang! Bang! — pfft! pfft! It was done: the lion had two explosive balls in his head. — For a moment, in the fiery African heavens, there were terrific fire-works of exploding brains, smoking blood, and tufts of tawny hide. Then all fell to earth, and Tartarin perceived — two furious, tall negroes rushing upon him with their sticks raised. The two negroes of Milianah!

O misery! It was the tame lion, the poor blind one of Mohammed's convent, that the Tarasconian bullets had just laid low.

This time, by Mahoum, Tartarin escaped well. Drunk with fanatic fury, the two negro friars would surely have torn him to pieces, had not Providence sent to his aid a delivering angel, — the policeman of the commune of Orleansville, coming up by a little path, with his sword under his arm.

The sight of the municipal *képi* suddenly calmed the anger of the negroes. Peaceful and majestic, the man with the badge drew up an ac-

count of the affair, had the camel loaded with what remained of the lion, ordered the complainants, as well as the delinquent party, to follow him, and directed his steps towards Orleansville, where all was put upon the records.

It was a long and terrible procedure! After the Algeria of the tribes, which he had just gone over, Tartarin of Tarascon came to know another Algeria, not less strange and formidable, the Algeria of cities, full of lawyers and processes. He came to know the pettifoggers who meet at the remote corners of the cafés, the *Bohemia* of the men of law; the files smelling of absinthe, and the white ties spotted with *champoreau;* he came to know the ushers, the attorneys, the business-agents, and all those lean and famished legal-paper locusts who eat the colonist down to his very boot-straps, and leave him, cut leaf by leaf, like a stalk of maize.

First of all, there was the question whether the lion had been killed on civil or on military ground. In the former case, the affair belonged to the Civil Court; in the latter, Tartarin was within the jurisdiction of the Council of War, and, at these words "Council of War," the impressionable Tarasconian began to see himself already shot, or lying at the bottom of a pit.

The terrible fact is that the boundaries between the two grounds are very vague in Algeria. At last, after a month of rushing about, intriguing, and standing in the sun, in the courts of the Arab offices, it was established that, if on the one hand, the lion had been killed on military ground, on the other hand Tartarin, when he fired, was on civil ground. So the case was adjudged as civil; and our hero got off for an indemnity of *twenty-five hundred francs*, without costs.

How was he to pay all that? The few piastres which had escaped the prince's raid, had all been spent, long since, in legal papers and in judicial absinthes. So the unlucky lion-killer was reduced to selling the chest of arms at retail, carabine by carabine. He sold the poniards, the Malay krishes, and the bludgeons. A grocer bought the potted provisions; and an apothecary, what remained of the plasters. The hunting-boots, too, went, following the perfected shelter-tent, to a bric-a-brac merchant's, who raised them to the dignity of Cochin-Chinese curiosities. When once all was paid, there remained for Tartarin only the lion's skin and the camel. The skin he packed up carefully, and sent off to Tarascon, to the address of the brave commandant, Bravida. (We

shall see presently what became of this fabulous spoil.) As for the camel, he meant to use him to reach Algiers, not by riding him, but by selling him to pay his stage-fare, which is, after all, the best way of riding a camel. Unfortunately, the beast was hard to dispose of, and nobody offered a cent for him.

Tartarin was bound, however, to reach Algiers, anyhow. He was in a hurry to see Baïa's blue dress, his cottage, and its fountains, and to rest on the white clover of his little enclosure, while waiting for money from France. So our hero did not hesitate: heart-broken, but not cast down, he undertook the journey without money, by short stages, afoot.

At this juncture, the camel did not forsake him. This strange animal was taken with an inexplicable tenderness for his master, and, seeing him start off from Orleansville, began to walk after him religiously, regulating his step by Tartarin's, and not leaving a foot between them.

At first, Tartarin found this touching: this fidelity, this devotion under every trial, went to his heart, the more so that the beast was convenient, and lived on nothing. Still, after some days, the Tarasconian was annoyed at having perpetually at

his heels this melancholy companion, who reminded him of all his misadventures; then, becoming sour over it, he began to be vexed with its sad air, its hump, and its look of a bridled goose. To be candid, he took a dislike to it, and thought only of getting rid of it; but the animal held firm. Tartarin tried to lose it, but the camel found him again; he tried running, but the camel ran faster. He tried shouting: "Get out!" and threw stones at him. The camel would stop, and look at him with a sad expression; then, in a minute, start again, and always, in the end, catch up with him. Tartarin had to resign himself.

However, when, after a long week's march, the Tarasconian, dusty and harassed, saw far off, shining amid the verdure, the first white terraces of Algiers; when he found himself at the gates of the city, on the noisy Mustapha avenue, in the midst of zouaves, biskris, and Mahonian women, all swarming around him, and watching him trudge along with his camel, for the nonce his patience forsook him. "No! No!" said he, "it is impossible. I cannot enter Algiers with such an animal!" And, profiting by a confusion of vehicles, he made a circuit in the fields, and threw himself into a ditch!

In a moment he saw, above his head, — in the middle of the road, the camel striding along, and stretching out its neck with an anxious air.

Then, relieved of a great load, the hero came out of his hiding-place, and entered the city by a side-path, which ran by the wall of his little enclosure.

CHAPTER VII.

CATASTROPHES ON CATASTROPHES.

On his arrival before his Moorish house, Tartarin stood still in great astonishment. The day was drawing to a close, and the street deserted. Through the open ogived door, which the negress had forgotten to shut, were heard laughter, clinking of glasses, popping of champagne-corks, and, above all this jolly uproar, a woman's voice, clear and gay, singing:

"Amies-tu, Marco la Belle,
"La danse aux salons en fleurs" —

"Odsbodikins!" cried the Tarasconian, turning pale; and he rushed into the court.

Unhappy Tartarin! What a spectacle awaited him! — Under the arches of the little cloister, in the midst of bottles, pastry, scattered cushions, pipes, tambourines, and guitars, stood Baïa, no longer in her blue dress, but in a short, flimsy, silvery, gauzy robe, and in rose-colored pantalettes,

singing Marco la Belle, with a naval-officer's cap on one ear. At her feet, on a mat, full of love and sweetmeats, lay Barbassou, infamous Captain Barbassou, listening, and bursting with laughter.

The appearance of Tartarin, wan, thin, and dusty, with flaming eyes and bristling *sheshia*, broke up at once this pleasant Turco-Marseillese orgy. Bara uttered a little cry, like a frightened hare, and fled into the house. As for Barbassou, he did not trouble himself, but laughed harder yet.

"Well! Well! Mr. Tartarin, what do you say to this? You see now she knew French!"

Tartarin of Tarascon advanced, furious:

"Captain!"

"*Digo-li qué vengué, moun bon!*" cried the Moorish girl, leaning over from the gallery, with a pretty and vulgar gesture. The poor man, overwhelmed, let himself sink on to a drum. His Moorish lady knew even the Marseillese dialect!

"When I told you to mistrust Algerian ladies!" said Captain Barbassou sententiously. "It's like your Montenegrin prince."

Tartarin raised his head:

"Do you know where the prince is?"

"Oh! he is n't far off. He has rooms for five

years in the fine prison of Mustapha. The rogue let himself be caught with his hand in the bag. Besides, it is n't the first time they've put him in the shade. His Highness has already spent three years in the Central House somewhere — and, there now! I rather think it was at Tarascon."

"At Tarascon!" cried Tartarin, suddenly enlightened. "That is why he knew only one side of the town."

"Oh! No doubt — Tarascon seen from the Central House. Ah! my poor Mr. Tartarin, one must keep his weather-eye open in this deuced country; else one gets into very unpleasant scrapes. There's your affair with the muezzin."

"What affair? What muezzin?"

"Why, bless you! — the muezzin over the way, who used to court Baïa. The *Akbar* told the story the other day; and all Algiers is laughing over it yet. It is so comical, that muezzin up there in his tower, singing his prayers, and, under your very nose, making declarations to the little one, and arranging to meet her, calling on the name of Allah all the while."

"But then they're all scoundrels in this country?" howled the unhappy Tarasconian.

Barbassou made a philosophical gesture:

"My dear fellow, you know, in new countries — But it's all the same. If you will believe me, you had better return to Tarascon quickly."

"Return! It is easy enough to say that. But the money — You don't know how they plucked me down there in the desert?"

"Let that make no odds!" said the captain, laughing. "The *Zouave* sails to-morrow, and if you like, I'll take you home: does that suit you, mate? Then, all right. You have now but one thing to do. There are still a few bottles of champagne, and half a pie. Sit down there, — and no bad feelings, eh?"

After the hesitation of a moment which his dignity demanded of him, the Tarasconian took his part bravely. He sat down, and they drank. Baïa came down at the sound of glasses, and sang the end of "Marco la Belle;" and the feast was prolonged well into the night.

About three in the morning, with light head and heavy feet, the good Tartarin was returning from seeing his friend the captain home, when, as he passed before the mosque, the recollection of the muezzin and of his tricks made him laugh, and a splendid scheme of revenge crossed his mind. The door was open. He entered, followed long

corridors, carpeted with matting, went up, then up again, and at last found himself in a little Turkish oratory, where a lantern in chiselled iron was swinging from the ceiling, embroidering the white walls with strange shadows.

The muezzin was there, sitting on a divan, with his big turban, his white pelisse, and his Mostaganem pipe; and before him was a large glass of fresh absinthe, which he was stirring religiously, waiting for the hour for calling the believers to prayer. At the sight of Tartarin, he dropped his pipe from terror.

"Not a word, curate," said the Tarasconian, who had his scheme. "Quick, your turban, and your pelisse!"

The Turkish curate, trembling all over, gave him his turban and pelisse, — all that he wanted. Tartarin wrapped himself in them, and passed gravely out on to the terrace of the minaret.

The sea was shining far off. The white roofs were sparkling in the moonlight. Wafted on the sea-breeze, were heard some belated guitars. The muezzin of Tarascon collected his thoughts a moment, and then, raising his arms, began to psalmodize in a very shrill voice:

— "La Allah il Allah. Mahomet is an old

humbug. The East, the Koran, the pachagas, the lions, the Moorish ladies, are all not worth a cent! There are no more *Turs:* there are only blacklegs. Hurrah for Tarascon!"

And, while in a queer jargon, made up of Arabic and Provençal, the illustrious Tartarin was hurling to the four corners of the horizon his joyous Tarasconian malediction, the clear, solemn voices of the other muezzins answered him, receding from minaret to minaret, and the last believers in the upper town devoutly struck their breasts.

CHAPTER VIII.

TARASCON! TARASCON!

Noon. The *Zouave* is getting up steam: she is going to start. Up there, on the balcony of the café Valentin, naval officers are pointing their glasses, and coming, with the colonel at the head, according to their rank, to look at the happy little boat which is going off to France. It is the chief amusement of the staff. Below them, the harbor is sparkling. The breeches of the old Turkish cannon, buried along the quay, glare in the sunlight. The passengers are hurrying. Biskris and Mahonians are piling up baggage in the boats.

Tartarin of Tarascon has no baggage. There he comes down from the Rue de la Marine, past the little market, stocked with bananas and watermelons, accompanied by his friend Barbassou. The unlucky Tarasconian has left on the Moorish coast his chest of arms and his illusions, and now is getting ready to sail for Tarascon, with his hands in his pockets. Scarcely has he jumped

into the captain's gig, when a breathless beast rushes down from the upper part of the Square, and gallops precipitately towards him. It is the camel, the faithful camel, who, for twenty-four hours, has been seeking its master in Algiers.

Tartarin, on seeing it, changes color, and pretends not to recognize it; but the camel is obstinate. It fidgets along the quay. It calls upon its friend, and looks at him tenderly. "Take me away," its sad eye seems to say: "Take me away in the boat, far, far away from this painted, cardboard Arabia — this ridiculous East, full of locomotives and stage-coaches, where I — dethroned dromedary — don't know what I shall do. Thou art the last *Tur;* I the last camel. Let us never part, O my Tartarin!"

"Is that camel yours?" asks the captain.

"By no means!" answers Tartarin, who shuddered at the idea of entering Tarascon with such a ridiculous escort; and, impudently denying the companion of his misfortunes, he spurns with his foot the Algerian soil, and gives the boat a parting shove. The camel snuffs the water, stretches out his neck, makes all his joints crack, and, plunging in, all over, after the boat, and, keeping stroke, swims toward the *Zouave*, with his humped

back floating like a gourd, and his long neck standing up, like the prow of a trireme.

Boat and camel came up alongside the packet together.

"I am beginning to pity that dromedary!" said Capt. Barbassou: quite moved: "I have a mind to take him on board. When we get to Marseilles, I will do homage to the Zoölogical Garden with him."

With a grand arrangement of tackle and cords, they hoisted the water-logged camel on to deck; and the *Zouave* started.

For the two days that the passage lasted, Tartarin staid all alone in his stateroom, not that the sea was rough, or that the *sheshia* had a particularly hard time; but the wretched camel, as soon as his master appeared on deck, would lavish upon him ridiculous demonstrations of affection. You never saw a camel advertise any one like that!

From hour to hour, through the cabin portholes, where he showed his nose occasionally, Tartarin saw the blue Algerian sky grow pale; then at last, one morning, in a silvery fog, he heard with joy all the bells of Marseilles pealing. They had arrived, and the Zouave anchored.

Our friend, who had no baggage, landed without

saying a word, hastily crossed Marseilles, fearful always of being followed by the camel, and breathed only when he found himself established in a third-class carriage, speeding away to Tarascon. Mistaken security! Scarcely is he two leagues from Marseilles, before every one's head is out of the window; and there are shouts of astonishment. Tartarin looks in his turn; and what does he behold?—That camel, sir, the inevitable camel, flying along the track, in the middle of Crau, after the train, and keeping up with it. Tartarin, in consternation, buried himself again in his corner, and shut his eyes.

After this disastrous expedition, he had counted on returning home incognito. But the presence of this cumbrous quadruped rendered it impossible. Goodness! What an entrance he was going to make! Not a cent—not a lion—nothing—but a camel!

"Tarascon! Tarascon!"

He had to get out.

What a surprise! Scarcely had the hero's *sheshia* appeared in the doorway, when a loud shout, "Hurrah for Tartarin!" made the station-walls shake. "Hurrah for Tartarin! Three cheers for the lion-killer!" Trumpets and Orphe-

onic choruses struck up. Tartarin thought he should die: he believed there was some mystification. But no! All Tarascon was there, with hats in air, and sympathetic. There is the brave commandant Bravida, the gunsmith Costecalde, the president, the apothecary, and all the noble body of cap-hunters, who throng around their chief, and carry him in triumph down the stairs.

Singular effects of mirage! The blind lion's skin, sent to Bravida, had been the cause of all this noise. By this modest fur, exhibited at the club, the Tarasconians, and after them all Southern France, had had their imaginations roused. *Le Semaphore* had spoken. They had invented a drama. It was no longer one lion Tartarin had killed: it was ten lions, twenty lions, a jam of lions! Tartarin, on landing at Marseilles, was already illustrious: an enthusiastic telegram had preceded him, by two hours, to his native town.

But what gave the climax to the popular joy, was the sight of a fantastic animal, covered with sweat and dust, appearing behind the hero, and limping down the staircase. Tarascon thought for a moment that her Tarasque had returned.

Tartarin re-assured his fellow-citizens:

"It is my camel," said he.

And, already under the influence of the Tarasconian sun, that bright sun which makes one lie ingenuously, he added, patting the dromedary's hump:

"'T is a noble beast! It has seen me kill all my lions."

Thereupon, he familiarly took the arm of the commandant, who was blushing for joy; and, followed by his camel, surrounded by the cap-hunters, and cheered by all the people, he directed his steps peacefully toward the house of the baobab; and, on the way, he began the account of his grand hunts.

"Imagine," said he, "a certain evening, in the open Sahara —"

THE END.

Stirling, May 1890.

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